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LIFE.

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OLD AT NIGHTFALL.

It was a stormy September evening Guy Urquehart and my respected self —Charles Ellingstone, painter—were sitting in the studio window of his delightful little villa, at Frascati, near Leghorn, over the rounded tops of woods and land in the red setting sun. Beneath a leaden sky the gloomy Campagna stretched like a dead sea, and with its far rim cut the disc, a portentous blood-red ball, slowly, slowly sinking.

Guy and I had been old friends and school-fellows in England. He was two or three years older than myself, but that had made his friendship for me all the tenderer, and mine for him reverential. Besides, I had looked on Guy as a kind of genial young saint. I had always felt rather wicked in his company, because he really seemed, quite naturally, never to do anything wrong, or to have so much as a wrong thought. He would have chosen art as his profession, I knew, had he been allowed a voice in the arrangement of his own future: but the bilious old father who ruled his destiny made a civil engineer of him, without the slightest reference to any possible fancy or protest of the lad's. Naturally, he did not take kindly to his work though he buckled to it conscientiously.

When I came to Italy to study art, Guy and I kept up a pretty brisk correspondence for about a twelvemonth. But in my second Italian summer his letters suddenly ceased to arrive. I wrote to him in vain hope of answer for six months, and then let the correspondence go with a sigh.

I easily ascertained that he was alive and well, but could find out nothing else about him that was more reliable, than the gossip retailed out by certain English military men, who had flapped their lazy flight across the sea one winter, and perched in Rome. "Got into a scrape about a woman, and didn't behave well to her, or something of the sort," drawled out one of these amiable gentlemen. And this was all I could discover about poor Urquehart.

But at last I heard from Guy himself once more. Lo! he had inherited a small fortune from a distant relation; he had thrown civil engineering overboard, he was coming to Rome forthwith to study art in earnest at last; and we must spend the ensuing summer in Vingegiatura together, eating figs at Tuscolum. At the time my story begins, he had been about six weeks in Rome, and had already painted one or two capital little pictures.

No village in the world drives such a roaring trade in scandal as grand old Rome. You have seen how Urquehart's character went before him, as Sir Peter Teazle's stayed behind, for the comfort of the community, and what mercy it met with. Now, when circumstances conserved up in this mixed way, there are generally certain facts which one may trace like pebbles through disturbing waves. I felt convinced that I should do so in Urquehart's case, if ever it pleased him to give me his confidence.

But I could not try to thrust myself into any chamber of his past not freely opened to me. I could not help guessing that there was a shut and locked door, behind which lurked the solution of a mystery. This mystery was the great and grievous change in my friend, not to be accounted for by the mere lapse of two or three years. And this change was all the more remarkable that it was not always obvious. No two men could be more unlike than Urquehart to Urquehart in different moods. It seemed to me as if much evil had flowed into his heart by some rent where much good had run out, but that the poison had never mixed with the healthy juice of his life.

On this September evening, as we sat together, Guy had been muttering some very bad sentiments, which would have grieved me more if I had not attributed them in part to some unripe peaches and the state of his stomach.

"Guy," said I suddenly, "I've found a key to much that makes people gasp and stare at you."

"What do you mean?" returned he rather roughly.

"Most persons," I went on, "are half-angel, half-devil, they say. But your angel and devil seem to share their lodging on the most curious terms of mutual forbearance. They seem to take you turn and turn about, in watches, as it were. Your angel never torments your devil, or interferes with his mode of enjoying himself, his Walpurgis nights with his man; and your devil with equal politeness, never intrudes himself on the angelical prayer meetings. They could not possibly come in contact without disturbing the harmony of the system; but they seem to agree to differ, like certain polite married couples."

Urquehart took his pipe from his mouth, and blew out a long smoke wreath. Then he leaned head and shoulders out of the window, and stared far away at the sun, now like a clot of blood on the livid horizon, till even that crimson speck was absorbed. Then he brought himself back to his former position in a corner of the ricketty old sofa, and from that dusky corner spake.

"You hooked a fine fat fish there, my young friend, with your moral critical line. Your sagacity really deserves patting for having snapped up such a good head of game. Still, you don't know how the devil got into me; how should you? He had hardly set claw on your friend when we were boys together, and I rather the better boy of the two."

"You may well say that, old fellow! At that time (and what a little while ago it is, after all!) you really seemed incapable of evil, or even of comprehending it. You trusted everybody implicitly, because you yourself were—"

"An ass!" roared Urquehart. "And now listen."

So, as the night fell, and "the casement slowly grew a glimmering square" in the blackness, Urquehart's tale was told.

"Fourteen months ago, I was lodging for the summer in a farmhouse in a village, no matter where. The only house there belonging to gentlefolks, except the wretched old parsonage, was Squire Ringwood's. It was a big, stupid looking mansion, on a hill, staring down overbearingly at the poor little tenements huddled together below; and the burly squire himself was for all the world like his house, as he sat on his tall horse, and looked down pompously over his vast waistcoat at a frightened crew of village children. The squire had an ugly, sickly wife and daughter, and they had an humble companion that was an angel of beauty. I fell in love with her at church. Oh, the little church in the west country, hid in the bowery orchard hollow! Oh, the sudden delicious gust that littered the graves with blossoms!—your mother's grave, Charley; has the dear woman the violets I planted there? or did they die like the faith and hope she set in me? I fell in love with Fanny Vale before I knew her name; I learned that from the farmhouse folks with whom I lodged. They told me, moreover, that she was a young widow, and still in weeds when she came to lodge very humbly in the village six months before; that the squire's wife and daughter had taken a fancy to her, and had adopted her into their family, as a kind of reader and companion of all work. I made her acquaintance by a note which I threw at her feet over a hedge the first time I spied her walking alone. I need not swear to you that I never had an evil wish or thought about her. To me a woman was a holy thing, deserated by no lowness of condition, deserving of any gentleman's love and reverence, if endowed with certain qualities. These qualities I now took on trust, and, being enchanted by her beauty, saw also the perfection of moral loveliness in her face. Such an angelic face, Charley! There she sat in the squire's pew, beside her ugly patronesses, with such intelligence in her melancholy blue eye and fair half-moon of brow, such a breathing sensibility in her silence; and when I came to know her, what sympathy in her smile, what silken manners, so soft, graceful, caressing, yet modest and full of suave dignity! She did not answer my note; but when I went to the copse behind Ringwood house, where I had implored her to meet me, she was there. She came, she said, only to beg me to come, and write no more. She was a poor dependent, and the least suspicion falling on her would cast her homeless and friendless on the world. I will not dwell on this stale love story; it was perfectly commonplace of its kind, except that the dupe was not, for once, the humble beauty, but the gentleman from London. She consented to be my wife; and at the summer's end, without asking her a single question as to her past, without knowing more of it than the farm folk had volunteered to tell me the first day I saw her, I brought this girl to London, and married her. That's what came of being too good for this world, incapable of evil, or the comprehension of it. I had written to tell my father of my intended marriage to (I frankly confessed) a perfectly obscure and penniless young woman, that had of course everything *but* position and wealth to recommend her. I wrote a respectful letter which I received back in a blank cover. Yet my heart yearned to the cross-grained old man, and from the glory and joy of my fool's paradise I emerged voluntarily, before the honeymoon was over, to seek a reconciliation with my father.

"When I got to his door, he drove me away like a beggar, like a strange dog, with his lifted stick, with his mouth full of curses. That is the last I ever saw of him. He died, six months after, implacable.

"I hurried back to town, to be comforted by the angel in my house. I returned sooner than I was looked for. I opened the door by a latch key, and went softly up stairs to surprise my wife. It was about two in the afternoon. Our little drawing-room had folding doors, which were now ajar. No one was in the front room, but I heard—I heard my wife's voice in the other. I heard her voice and a man's. I had but to step forward, and I saw—"

It was quite dark by this time, and here the noice that had come out of Urquehart's black corner suddenly broke into an awful sob.

"Don't go on," said I, much distressed.

"Let me alone," gasped Urquehart, savagely.

In less than a minute he resumed, steadily:

"I saw my wife with her arms round a man's neck. She was passionately entreating him not to leave her; he was trying to release himself. The next moment they saw me, and started apart. Then, instantly, my wife, that tender angel, flung herself at me like a wild cat. She did not scream, but through her shut teeth she said, 'I'll kill you, I'll kill you, if you touch him!' Her blue eyes glared much like yonder blue lightning that keeps flashing out there, and something glittered close to my face. She had snatched up her scissors, and I verily believe would have dug them into my temple if the man, her lover, had not come and pulled down her hand. She was going to fall into his arms again, but he put her from him, not very gently, and told her to sit down. She obeyed him instantly. I cannot in the least describe my state of mind all this time, which was only a minute or two, I suppose. My impression is that I had ceased to feel; that if my brain and heart had been scooped out, I could not have been emptier of emotion and thought; that I was not conscious of any vindictive rage, or any transport of despair. Some people may think I ought to have kicked that man down stairs. I neither did so, nor felt any desire to hurt him. It was he who took the initiative, and made me a sign to go into the front room with him which I did. Then, when I stood there face to face with him, I said suddenly, and, as it were, involuntarily—

"'Who are you?'

"'I am sorry for you,' said he, in a gentle drawl, looking at me quite compassionately; 'this woman has treated you very badly. Still, you know, you have only yourself to thank. Your conduct has really been quite inconceivably rash, you know—'

"'Who are you?' I repeated, staring at him bluntly.

"'I am Captain Edward Ringwood. This woman is an actress, whom I became acquainted with about a year or two before you first saw her. I assure you I knew nothing of your love affair or proposed marriage. If I had known in time, I should certainly have considered it my duty to warn you of the awful blunder you were making. When I went abroad with my regiment, it seems she chose to go down and wriggle herself into my family. What her motive was, I can't imagine. She is a most artful, dangerous person, that is clear. She saw my return to England in the papers yesterday, and sent me a note inviting me to come and see her at this address, which I did. I give you my word of honor I had not been here ten minutes when you made your appearance. She had just told me she was married, and this was your house; upon which I got up and wished her good-day.'

"By this time I had found myself unable to stand, and was sitting on the sofa with my head between my hands. When Captain Ringwood left off speaking, I looked up, meaning to say something, but forgot what it was, and only stared at him silently.

"He was a fair, slight young man, about thirty, with handsome, thin features, and large, light-brown whiskers. He stood there looking at me with the same good-natured concern in his face that he had expressed in words, in his fashionable, affected way.

"At last I recollected what I had been going to say, and told him I wished to be left alone. He silently took out his card, laid it on the chimney-piece, and went out.

"I don't know how many hours I remained lying on the sofa, with my eyes shut, in that strange torpor; but it was night when I opened them, and found my wife standing by me. She had lighted the candles on the chimney-piece, and was stooping down over me. She started upright as my eyes opened out she did not avoid them. She confronted me, arching back her nymph-like figure, and leaning one hand on a table behind her. I felt no emotion at sight of her, but looked at her as if she had been a picture. Her beauty was splendid. All her fair golden hair was turned off her white face in a sort of glittering aureola. Her great turquoise-blue eyes flared under slightly contracted brows; the nostrils of her delicate, straight nose, and her infantine mouth expressed rage and pain.

"'I am glad you are awake,' said she; 'I want you to hear me say I hate you!'

"'I don't care,' said I, wearily. 'Go away.'

"Her face flamed out with the fury that was burning her heart.

"'But you do care!' she cried; 'you shall care! I tell you I always laughed at you and despised you. I only married you from pique—because he left me. I got into his family, and tolled them, and made myself their servant, only to hear of him, and to feel nearer him, and be where he had been—I love him so! I love no one else in the world—I never did. I would kill you, and a dozen like you, to save him from a fingerache. I would rather a thousand times have a blow from him than a kiss from you—a hundred million times! When I think of him, and that you are between us, I hate you—I abhor you! How dare you smile at me? I'll kill you!'

"I was quite unconscious of smiling; but she darted at me, and struck at my throat. I caught her hand; this time she had a penknife in it, and I felt that she had pricked me. That instinctive act of self-defence roused me, and probably saved my wits as well as my life. When I had mastered her, and thrown the knife away, I held her hands in mine till she put down her face and bit them savagely. I tied her wrists with my pocket handkerchief, and she sank panting on a chair. All of a sudden the unhappy creature burst out crying as if her heart was broken—as it well might be. Probably Ringwood's cool treatment of her throughout the interview recently passed, was at the bottom of that frenzy of vituperation, that desperate behavior toward me. She did not hate me, but was simply mad with pain, and raved and struck out in her delirium. I think she really liked me when she married me, notwithstanding her assertion to the contrary, and meant and wished to lead a new life; but the sight of Ringwood's name in the papers, and the knowledge of his nearness, in my absence, revived her passion for him, in which her good resolutions burnt like straw. I released her hands, and brought water and put it to her lips; and when she was quiet through exhaustion, I advised her to lie down, and hoped she would go to sleep. As I was leaving the room, she called me back, in a low, broken voice, and when I stood beside the sofa on which she lay, she joined her hands, and asked me, with streaming eyes to forgive her. I did so, freely. Of course, Ringwood was right. I had no one but myself to thank. My infatuation had been so monstrous, that I could no more complain of the consequences than a man, sober, can complain of the consequences of some drunken folly.

"In the morning I took Fanny away to a farmhouse in Kent, a place she knew of, and close herself for a retreat. She was quiet and humble, and apparently broken-spirited. But she did not remain there a month; nor do I know whither she went, or where she has been ever since. Before she left she wrote me a long letter expressing her remorse at her behavior toward me: 'bad as I am,' ended she, 'I will never trouble you more. I do implore you to be sure of that, and to forget me, or to think of me as dead.'

"I am afraid to think of her at all. I made every possible effort to trace her, quite in vain; and I hardly know where would be the good if I succeeded.

"That's all," added Urquehart, after a moment's pause; "and there's the history of your friend and the wife of his bosom; and if you still wonder how or when my devil got into me, I don't. I believe you love me enough to think he is not so black a devil as he is painted. I am not the kind of man in whose heart such a gash could be made, and heal, and leave no mark. For a long while this world seemed, and often does seem, really an Inferno; nothing but plunging and breaking one's heart in a swamp of suffering, with intervals of quiet from mere exhaustion and despair. O Charley! how I wished your mother had been alive! I wanted some kind woman, that was honest and pure, about me: we men all do in our dark hour. *Basta!*—let us go down to the drawing-room, and our friends, and the lamp. By Jove, what a flash! There's a mighty storm brewing, young fellow."

On the day of victory no weariness is felt.

Russo-creek Marriage.

As the marriage service of the Russo-Greek church differs considerably from that of the English, a glance at its chief features may prove interesting. Nothing can be done in Russia without a passport. The orthodox Russian may neither live nor die without one. It is not to be wondered at, then, that marriage should be preceded by the production of the young people's passports and an exhaustive inquiry into their birth, breeding, station, calling, circumstances and orthodoxy. The information thus diligently gathered by the priest is put down in the parish registry, and the first thing the bride and bridegroom and their witnesses have to do is to attest its accuracy with their signatures. Then follows the betrothal, once a separate ceremony, and not necessarily gone through in church, but now the immediate prelude to the sacrament of marriage—the reason assigned for the change being that in the interval between the two ceremonies the betrothed used sometimes to quarrel and refuse to carry out their mutual promises. The betrothal takes place near the porch, the bridegroom standing on the right, the bride on the left. The priest takes from him a golden ring, from her a silver one, carries them to the altar, and there deposits them as a sign that the Almighty sanctifies the union. Returning to the young couple, he gives each a lighted taper and pronounces the blessing. The deacon invites all present to pray for them, that their love may be perfect, their faith firm, their living pure, their union fruitful. Then, with another prayer, the priest places the gold ring on the bridegroom's finger, the silver on the bride's, repeating over each three times, "N., the servant of God, is betrothed to M., the servant of God, in the name of the Father; the Son and the Holy Ghost, now, ever and in all eternity, amen." Then he who stands godfather, "who answers for the agreement of the young couple, being himself experienced in married life," removes the rings from their fingers and replaces them, the gold on the bride, the silver on the bridegroom. The church holds that the lighted tapers symbolize spiritual joy and the purity of the motives by which the betrothed are inspired, while the rings signify the indissoluble band between them. The bridegroom's ring is of gold, the bride's of silver, to show the dependence of the one on the other and her inferiority in matters of right. When the bridegroom accepts the silver ring he shows his willingness to love and cherish his wife and condescend to her natural weakness. She, on the other hand, acquires a share in the rights, privileges, and honors of her husband. The priest prays "that the Lord may confirm their bethrothal in the faith, unity of thought, truth and love, and that the Angel of God may go with and before them all the days of their life." Prayer for the czar and the holy synod bring the betrothal to an end. It will be observed that the lighted tapers recall a similar custom amongst the ancient Greeks, and the learned say that the gold and silver rings represent the sun and the moon, whose union the ancient Slavonians held to be symbolized in marriage as their decendents that of Christ and the church. For the marriage itself the young people advance to the reading desk in the center of the church and kneel down before it on one kerchief (to signify that henceforth they have one lot); the officiating priest ask them if they marry of free will and with a thorough appreciation of the importance of the step. Then follow prayers on behalf of the bridegroom and bride, that they may be endowed with all virtues and vouchsafed every blessing, after which the priest places on the head of each a crown "as a reward for the preservation of chastity and as a sign that they may be the originators of a numerous and honorable posterity, and also to remind them that they are first to rule their own passions and then by God's blessing have dominion upon earth, according to the word of the Lord to Adam and Eve.

Things that are Cheap.

Only three things are cheap in Mexico—pulque, flowers and money. The latter is at a discount of seventeen per cent. and the visitor feels that he is driving a staving business when he exchanges one hundred dollars of American money for one hundred and seventeen dollars of the same looking sort of currency. Flowers of all kinds are about as cheap as anything in the world—everybody can have a bouquet, and about everybody does. Pulque is considered cheaply by the natives, because it is sold at a cent a tumblerful, but it seems to me it would be dear at a cent a hogshead. However, the people like it—the Indians, Meztizoes, and Creoles, nearly all. No less than twenty thousand gallons are said to be drunk in this city every day.

Byron calls attention to the great fact that "man, being reasonable, must get drunk." What would man in Mexico do without pulque? It is strange how kind Nature provides for all the indispensable needs of the human family! The maguey plant makes its dwelling-place on the Mexican uplands that stretch from mountain to mountain, 7,000 feet above the sea. Each plant occupies some thirty feet square; it has a short stem a foot or two in diameter and from this it sends upwards fifteen feet high huge spears of green. The plant matures at eight or ten years and will then yield that sweet milk which ferments and becomes pulque. The top of the stem is cut off and enough of the heart removed to leave a natural receptacle holding three or four gallons. This is removed twice a day and the flow of sap continues for three to six months. When the sap ceases to flow the plant shoots upward a gigantic stalk from its centre, twenty or thirty feet high, bearing in a clustered whorl a mass of greenish yellow flowers, sometimes as many as 3,000 in number. This is the famed "century plant."

The maguey is almost as useful to the Mexican as the cocoa-palm to the South Sea Islander. In fact, I don't know but it has a hundred uses, as that is alleged to have. Admirable paper is made from the pulp; twine and thread from the fibres; excellent needles from the thorns; thatches from the leaves; ropes from the bark; and pulque, mescal, and tequilla from the sap. There are thirty varieties of this American aloe, which Prescott calls "a miracle of nature," and the favorite sorts are planted in fields of thousands of acres and lend picturesqueness to the landscape for leagues.

It is better to wear out than to rust out.

Your Calling.

"I am sorry I was not trained to some commercial pursuit," said a professional gentleman to a successful business friend in Detroit yesterday.

"See here, young man," was the reply, "do you really think you are sorry? Aren't you doing well enough? Come, now, would you voluntarily give up your present calling?"

"Too old to think of change now."

"Nonsense! Never too old to correct mistakes. But in your case I suspect you want to make a mistake instead of to correct one. I made a mistake in my early life, and I'll tell you how it was:

"My father was a lawyer. There were three boys of us, and every influence was thrown around us when very young to stir in us the ambition to enter professional careers. We had a fine library, the tone of our home was refined and cultured, and before any of us grew up we were very well grounded in polite literature. We had sense enough to see that father would not listen to any objections to a professional life and so, under a sort of compulsion, we went the old gentleman's way. I was too good to be a preacher, and had too weak a stomach to be a doctor. The law was the last resort, so I took it up. After I was admitted I wrucked away at the dry and unproductive stuff for fifteen years. It was the martyrdom of drudgery. Finally I made a break, went into business and have always been prosperous and happy from that day to this. You see I had found my niche and I can say with truth that I find more pleasure in making a good sale than in pocketing the profits of it. My business suits me; I take pleasure in it and I long ago made up my mind that my boys should follow their inclinations in the matter of a life occupation, no matter whither they were led.

"The successful and great editors and writers are those who love with all-conquering enthusiasm the thorny and difficult road of journalism. It is so with our merchants and all manner of men. Ashley Pond, for example, loves the arena of the law. See the height he has attained to. C. H. Buhl is in love with business. He has worked up from nothing to a commanding place in the commercial world, and, I have no doubt, takes more pleasure in his office day by day than he could possibly extract from a tour of Europe.

"Better let your own honorable success heal that 'sorrow' you think you feel because you wern't introduced to tare and tret."

Some Barbecued Shoat.

The "rural roosters" of Arkansaw have an exalted conception of a governor's magnitude. Some time ago a barbecue was held at Grand Point, and, among other distinguished citizens, the governor agreed to attend. A large crowd assembled, and when it became known that the governor had arrived, the people were much excited in their anxiety to behold the august ruler. Old Sam Fellers, who had walked fifteen miles to be present on the occasion, turned to a friend, after an unsatisfactory search, and said:

"Has the governor got here yit, Bill?"

"Yes, thar he stan's, talkin' to the county jedge,"

"What? that feller with a red neck like a turkey gobbler?"

"That's the man,"

"W'y, dog gone his ugly pictur', he he ain't as big as I am. Been wantin' to see a guv'nor all my life, and now this is the way I'm sarved, T'other day I was tuck down with a congestive chill, an' I was powerful afeered that I would die afore I had a chance to see the ruler o' the State, but now I'll be blame if I don't wish I had died. Look at him, will yer, chawin' terbacker like a goat an' slobberin' like a grasshopper, I'm er great mind to jolt him all over this town fur givin' me sich er diserpp'intment. Wall, b'leve I'll go home."

"Sam, better stay an' git some of the barbecued shoat."

"No that feller has tuck my appertite. I've come to the conclusion that the country is a fraud. Governor!" he said, contemptuously; and rolling up his trowsers preparatory to a long journey, he departed, and, without looking back, disappeared in the woods.—*Arkansaw Traveller.*

An Escaped Comet.

During the last four years some comets have paid visits to the ruler of the solar system and displayed their dazzling trains to the admiration of his attendant worlds: Every one of these comets has been remarkable for some unusual or unaccountable conduct. The big comet of 1881 suddenly flirted its streaming tail into the northern hemisphere unannounced and unexpected, and surprised the astronomers at their telescopes as much as it did the milkmen on their early morning visits to the pumps. The comet of 1882 amazed the world by suddenly appearing at broad noon close to the sun, where it soared like a fiery bird with broad wings extended, and as it retreated from the solar system it appeared to be chased by a bevy of little comets to which it had apparently given birth during the terrors of its plunge through the flaming banners of the sun. In 1883 the comet of 1812 reappeared. But the most extraordinary comet of all is the one which was discovered at the Vienna observatory about a month ago. It seems to have been clearly seen, for the observers carefully measured its position among the stars, and it was believed from its place and motions that it was one of the comets of 1858 returning. But after thus showing itself the comet disappeared, and, although a battery of telescope has been brought to bear upon the spot where it appeared, from nearly every observatory in Europe, not a glimpse of the mysterious visitor from the realms of outer space has been caught.

What Shall I Be?

The office of Vice President was intended by the founders of our government to be an office of great dignity and importance. Under the mode of election as at first contrived the Vice President was to be in fact the second choice of the electors for President. The electors were to assemble at the time appointed in their respective states and vote for two persons. The votes were to be transmitted to the Senate and there opened. The person having a majority of the electoral vote was to be the President, and the person having the next highest number of votes, without respect to a majority, was to be Vice President. At the first election Washington received the unanimous vote of the electoral college, but John Adams received only thirty-four out of sixty-nine, not a majority, but the next highest number.

One of the first questions that Adams addressed his mind to was as to the titles which should go with the offices of President and Vice President. Sturdy patriot and great man that he was, he liked the trappings and the suits of office. He appeared on the streets accompanied by four sword-bearers, and he thought and said that the chief officers of the nation should be surrounded with splendor and pageantry. "High Mightiness and Protector of our Liberties" was the very lowest designation he could think of with which to approach the President. As to his own title he was uncertain. At the inauguration of Washington the arranged ceremony was that the President-elect should be received by the Senate and be escorted by it to the House of Representatives, where the oath was to be administered. This threw Adams into great perplexity, and he addressed the Senate as follows:

"Gentlemen I do not know whether the framers of the Constitution had in view the two Kings of Sparta, the two Consuls of Rome, or the two Suffetes of Carthage when they formed it—the one to have all the power while he held it and the other to be nothing. Gentlemen, I feel great difficulty how to act. I am possessed of two separate powers, the one in *esse*, the other in *posse*. I am Vice President. In this I am nothing, but I may be everything. But I am President also of the Senate. When the President comes into the Senate what shall I be? I wish gentlemen to think what I shall be."

A solemn silence ensued, though the sense of the ridiculous was so strong with some of the Senators that they came near bursting into laughter. Then Ellsworth arose, with most profound gravity, and said: "I have looked over the Constitution and I find, sir—it is evident and clear, sir—that wherever the Senate is to be there, sir, you must be at the head of them; but further, sir, I shall not pretend to say." The Senate held out some time for titles, but the House of Representatives would not listen to it, and it was finally ordered that the President should be addressed by his official title only—Mr. President. As to the Vice President, he got no designation whatever.

A Mazeppa of the Plains.

Mr. Boussand, a wealthy cattle owner, whose herds range in the unorganized territory of northwestern Nebraska, has just returned from the annual "round up" in that region and relates a tale of the plains that is, in some respects, a counterpart of the orthodox Mazeppa. When Boussand reached his ranch about the middle of June, he found his cowboys nursing a young man whom they had rescued from the back of a bronco. When discovered the modern Mazeppa was lashed to the horse, entirely naked and unconscious. The animal was about broken down, as if from long running, and was easily lassoed by the cowboys, who cut the thongs and released the strange captive. This happened about two weeks before Boussand's arrival and during all that time the stranger had lain in a stupor. A few days before Boussand started on his return journey to Omaha, having a little medical knowledge, he succeeded in restoring the patient to consciousness and his recovery was rapid.

When able to talk he said his name was Henry Burbank; that he was an Englishman, 34 years of age. About three years ago at Falmouth, England, he formed a partnership with a friend, Thomas Wilson, some years his senior, and with him came to America to embark in the cattle business. They cast about for a while and finally settled in northwestern Nebraska, where the range was unlimited and herders few and far apart. They built a comfortable ranch by a little stream, where Wilson's young wife reigned as housekeeper, attended by two or three female domestics. Burbank, who is a handsome young fellow, found it agreeable, while Wilsen was absent riding about the range, to make love to the latter's wife. This continued for some months until in the latter part of May one of the cowboys, who had a grievance against Burbank, reported the fact to the woman's husband, whose jealousy had already been aroused.

That night Burbank was captured while asleep in bed by Wilson and three of his men and bound before he had a chance to make any resistance. Wilson had him strippped of every bit of clothing and bound on the back of a wild bronco which was started off by vigorous lashing. Before morning Burbank became unconscious and was, therefore, unable to tell about his terrible trip. He thinks that the outrage was committed on the night of May 27 and he was rescued on the morning of June 3, which would make seven days he had been traveling about the plains without food or drink and exposed to the sun and wind. Wilson's ranch is about 200 miles from the spot where Burbank was found, but it is hardly probable that the bronco took a direct course, and therefore many more miles in his wild journey. When fully restored to health Burbank proposes to make a visit of retaliation on Wilson, and in this he will be backed by Boussand's men and those of the Ogallala Land and Cattle Company, whose range is near Boussand's.

A Water Safe.

The Emperor of Annam uses a large and deep pond of water as a safe for money and valuables. The money not intended for use is placed in the hollowed out trunks of trees, which are thrown into the water. To keep away thieves and prevent the king himself from being tempted to draw upon the reserve fund without sufficient cause, a number of crocodiles are kept in the water, their presence and the certainty of being eaten alive acting as a wholesome restrainer and insuring the security of the royal treasure in a most effectual manner. When it becomes indispensable to draw upon this novel style of bank the crocodiles have to be killed, but this can be done only with the Emperor's permission and after the matter has been duly approved by the Minister of Finance.

Mail Pouches.

The government spends about $50,000 a year for the repair of mail pouches; there are about 100,000 mail bags in use; and about 10,000 new ones are bought yearly. The weakest point in the mail sack is where it closes and opens. In closing the bag the staples are pushed through the slots, and project an inch or more. When the bag is thrown about the staples bend and often break. It looks strange that this little item should cast the government so much money but it does, for that is the main cause of repairs.

Benedict Arnold's House.

Mrs. Nichols, the present lessee of Benedict Arnold's house in New Haven is an intelligent lady, and shows much interest in the history connected with the house. "I leased the house," she said, "five years ago, just before the celebration of the invasion of the British. At that time and ever since I have had a great many people come and look over the house. I think I have had people from every State in the union. A great many Ohio people have been here, and they seem to take more interest in the historical incidents connected with the house than any other class. Soon after we came here, five years ago, my son, in digging in the front yards, found a silver spoon. It had the initials J. and T. on it. Thomas R. Trowbridge claimed that the spoon belonged to his ancestors, as Joseph Trowbridge once lived here; but a family by the name of Thomas lived here later, and it may be that the spoon belonged to that family. Mr. Trowbridge wanted the spoon, and promised my son a good position if he should ever want one, and my son gave it to him. Soon after that an agent of the Philadelphia Historical society was here and said that he would gladly have given $100 for the old spoon, as he thought it belonged to Arnold's family."

The house has been owned and occupied by some distinguished people. Benedict Arnold built it in 1771. After it was confiscated on account of his treachery it was bought by a Mr. Sloan, and Noah Webster bought it of him. Webster lived there about ten years, and the west parlor was used as the great lexicographer's study. Mr. Sloan had a daughter who married in Philadelphia, and she visited the house a year or so ago, so she stated, for the first time in 33 years. Noah Webster had a daughter Emma who married Professor Fowler of Durham, and Miss Sloan was quite intimate with her.

Mr. Sloan's daughter and her husband, at the time of their recent visit, wanted to see the parlor where they did their courting many years ago. They sat down in the window seat and remained nearly two hours, during which the lady alternately laughed and cried. She inquired whether Mrs. Nichols had seen in the hall chamber a pane of glass upon which Miss Webster's name had been cut with a diamond ring. The windows had been changed about, but the glass with "Emma Webster" on it was found in the east parlor. Mrs. Nichols recently pointed to the glass, which had been accidently broken directly across the name. "I am very sorry it is broken," she said, "for I had promised it to Professor Fowler's son."

Mrs. Nichol's visitor made a brief inspection of the house. The main hall is divided into front and rear halls, each one broad and spacious enough for a room. In the parlors, one on each side of the hall, are deep window seats, so frequent in well-appointed houses of a century ago. In the kitchen was a broad fireplace which might take in half a cord of wood. On opening the attic door, by turning a big key which certainly is suggestive of secrecy and exclusiveness, the hardwood stairs were ascended. The attic is the same size as the whole ground surface of the house, two immense chimneys being the only breaks. Here and there in four different places the flour timbers were visible where the boards have been removed. The flooring of the attic, as well as that in all the other rooms of the house, are of oak. Near the east chimney, on the west side, two vaults, formed by the projection of the fireplace, were discovered a few days ago on removal of the flooring. They are partially filled with straw and broken glass, and upon close inspection seem to have had some special purpose. Some people have suggested that they were built by Arnold for the purpose of secreting himself when a traitor to his country, but the house was built many years before the treachery of the builder.

Are our Climates Changing.

It is scarcely accurate to speak of "the climate of the United States;" there are so many of them that the plural is required. In many parts of the country, in fact, the changes are so sudden and so great that it may almost be said that there are two or three climates in a single day. Even in our "glorious climate of New England," people who are at all sensitive to the weather wore an overcoat or a shawl on June 19th, and slept with all the windows open and under a single sheet at night. There have been two or three June frosts already this year, and some of the hottest weather ever known outside the reign of the dog star. There are droughts in one State and floods in the next. Cyclones turn up in the most unheard-of places, and "cloud-bursts" ravage a New England town at about the same time they are submerging southwestern valleys. Nature never seemed so capricious and unaccountable in her freaks as she has been since the "gray day" two years ago when Garfield was borne from the Capital to the seashore to die.

The increase of cyclonic visitation in the Mississippi region is accompanied with an equally noticeable diminution of summer heat. Trusting to memory rather than to statistics—most unsafe dependence in matters relating to the weather—the average heat of the summers in some regions is not nearly as great as it was 20 or 30 years ago. St. Louis, for example was once considered almost an oven from the first of June to the first of September, is now comparatively cool; so cool that those who left the city the last two seasons in search of cooler places, found they had better have stayed at home. So cool was the summer of 1882 that weather experts prophesied an unusually hot one for 1883; but the summer of 1883 was even cooler than its predecessor, and from the present indications that of 1884 will be the coolest of the three. When, on the 10th of June, the thermometer in some latitudes marked 52 55 degrees, making fires and overcoats comfortable, while frost is reported in northern Missouri and Illinois, it looks much as if we were entering upon a new phase of climate."

Superstition of Ignorance.

Immediately after the body had been removed from the scaffold, in Naples, the people swarmed over the place, tearing into shreds the cord which bound the criminal and breaking into fragments the stool on which he sat. Each took away a portion, in obedience to the superstition that any part of the cord or the chair of a prisoner who has suffered death will bring good fortune to the possessor.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

—The palace of the Khedive is said to be rather shabby.

—The fruit crop in Germany is very abundant, it is reported.

—Mr. Froude has abandoned his tour to America this year.

—A large sanitarium for invalids is being built at San Diego.

—All newspaper men in Louisiana have to pay a license of $5.

—Nearly 5,000 women are employed in the government offices of England.

—London has a pauper population of 89,223 outside of asylums and almshouses.

—In 1829 eggs were but seven cents a dozen.

—London has 26,000 acres of forest parks; New York, 1,084; Philadelphia, 27,000.

—In Sweden a man who has been drunk three times loses the right of suffrage.

—James Russell Lowell received the degree of L. L. D. from Harvard recently.

—Frau Materna says she is delighted with America and hopes to return and sing in opera.

—Senator Ingalls, of Kansas, has received the degree of L. L. D. from Williams College.

—A gas well has been struck on the Insane Asylum grounds, at Stockton, California.

—Winter wheat has been selling recently at prices lower it stated, than in thirty years.

—The Princess Louise is to execute the statue of Queen Victoria for the Litchfield Cathedral.

—Four bushels of Irish potatoes planted at Newmansville, Fla., returned ninety bushels.

—Since 1868 over 85,000,000 young shad have been hatched by the New York Fish Commission.

—Fires involve a yearly loss in the United States of $100,000,000, or 1 per cent of the products.

—There are thirty-five Mormons and forty-four Gentiles confined at the Utah penitentiary.

—Russian advices from the Tamarsand district say that clouds of locusts are infesting that region.

—Durham, Conn., is intensely excited over the supposed discovery of a rich vein of coal there.

—A curled mustache is the latest fashion. New York barbers produce a beautiful curl for 25 cents.

—Colorado is compelled to by $2,000,000 worth of grain from outside sources every year to feed its cattle.

—More than sixty per cent, of the adult male population of New Mexico can neither read nor write.

—The potato crop of the United States in 1883 was 190,000,000 bushels as against 168,000,000 in 1882.

—London supports an eight-page penny monthly, the sole contents of which consist of selected poems.

—It took 1,000 lbs. of meat and 250 lbs. of salmon to "go round" at the recent alumni dinner of Yale.

—There are 52,000 growing trees in Washington, placed at regular intervals along 125 miles of fine streets.

—Complaints about the wearers of colored stockings being troubled by the dye stuffs in the latter are being revived.

—The $7000 bill presented by a New York dentist has drawn the fire of the paragraphists from the overworked plumber.

—A company of 450 French priests have just set out for Jerusalem, preparatory to a somewhat extensive tour of the Holy Land.

—A live oak tree at Indian River Narrows, Fla., measures twenty-three feet and ten inches in circumference six feet from the ground.

—Oil prices at Pittsburg are said to have touched a lower mark within the past week or two than since 1861-62, except in June, 1882.

—Since the year 1860 sixteen baronetcies and thirty-four knighthoods have been conferred upon the physicians and surgeons of Great Britain and Ireland.

—Some time ago a champagne house at Epernay offered prizes for the best five poems on champagne. No fewer than eleven hundred poems were sent in.

—The greatest distance ever ridden on a bicycle without dismounting is stated to be 230 miles 469 yards. The feat was accomplished in London in 1880.

—The United States Fish Commission has made the experiment of transplanting full grown lobsters, taken at the eastern end of Long Island, to Chesapeake Bay.

A gold fish, purchased twenty-two years ago by a lady of Frederick, Md., died recently. It is said that the old fish had not grown a particle during the whole period of its captivity.

—The excitement over the recent discovery of a $10,000 diamond at Eagle, Waukesha county, Wis., has been revived by the discovery of three more gems making seven found thus far.

—In consequence of the Socialist law the singular case has happened that the Royal State Procurator in Berlin has brought a complaint against the Royal Prefect of Police before the Minister of the Interior.

—A hundred-ton cannon that was being fired for the first time recently at Gibraltar, split or burst at the muzzle, in consequence of the shot not having been rammed home. Nobody was hurt.

—The manufacture of cotton seed oil is one of the great industries in the South. With the exception of Florida, there are factories in every Southern State, Texas having twenty. The oil is used for the table and also for illuminating and other purposes.

—The law requiring the closing of business places on Sunday is strictly enforced in Toronto, milk and apothecary stores being the only places allowed to remain open, and those only for a few hours in the morning and evening.

—Statistics of