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B. F. SCHWEIER, THE CONSTITUTION—THE UNION—AND THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS. Editor and Proprietor.

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### LOOK BEYOND.

Look beyond this teasing care,
Which, like the stinging pest,
That will not let me rest,
Drives reason from her lofty throne,
Mid hopeless, grim despair.

Look beyond colossal wrong,
With shameless "Gorgon" head,
A staid nation's dread,
Making an oft-defeated will
To cringe before the strong.

Look beyond the lessening light,
That simply, slowly fades,
Mid gathering evening shades,
While breathings weird from mystic realms
Reveal 'twill soon be night.

Look beyond the thoughts that crane
The wearying, finite mind,
That sees not God behind,
Whereby the all perfect plan doth seem
A willfuling needless maze.

Untutored children of to-day,
Whose hearts are in a sphere
We know must disappear,
Pause not to dream and moan and pine,
For look beyond, I say.

### THE LAST STRAW.

At the best of times we had hard work to "make both ends meet." Twelve years previously the firm in which my father was junior partner had failed, and then our troubles began. Anxious to retrieve his losses, he had embarked in various speculations, the result of which was that we were left penniless.

Coming home one evening through a blinding snow-storm, cold and miserable, and wondering if my way would always lie along the rough and dark paths of life, I became aware that our windows were unusually bright. Mollie opened the door, and I saw a curious mixture of pleasure and trouble on her sweet little face, while her eyes were decidedly red.

"What is the matter, Mollie?" I exclaimed. "Why is the best bed-room all lit up?"

But, before she could answer, I heard a footstep on the stairs, and, rushing up, encountered Ethel about half-way.

"Why, you darling," I cried, hugging her like a bear, "what do you mean by coming upon us like a thief in the night? How did you manage to get away? You said the house would be too full of people. Come down and tell us all about it;" and I began dragging her down the stairs. "Oh, dear! It is so nice to have you! Mollie and I were talking of you at breakfast, and saying what a comfort it would be if you were here and we could all grumble together."

"Don't be too glad about, Esther," put in Ethel sadly; I am afraid it is a matter for regret rather than rejoicing."

"Why? But, goodness, Ethel, what have you been doing to yourself?"—for we had got as far as the sitting-room, and the bright gaslight showed us a pale thin face not a bit like the bonny Ethel of old.

"I have not been well for a good while—in fact, never since we were at San Remo. I think that little attack I had there was really a fever which did not come out properly, and it has been in my system ever since."

"But, Ethel," I interrupted, "was it right not to tell us this before? You should have been taken care of long ago."

"I have really had every care," returned Ethel warmly. "But latterly my head has been so bad that I could not bear the children's noise; and the doctor says it is quite imperative that I should have a few months of complete rest."

"And a very sensible man he is too!" put in Mollie.

"Oh, if we could only sleep through the winter like dormice and hedgehogs!" sighed Mollie one morning at breakfast, when things were looking their gayest both inside and out.

"That's a happy idea, Mollie!" I answered. "If we could only carry it out, what a saving it would be."

"There's the postman!" observed papa.

"Oh, I don't care about him now Noel is at home. There is nothing much to expect but Christmas bills; and I am sure they won't conduce to my happiness," I answered, moodily stirring my tea.

"One for dad and one for you," said Mollie. "Looks suspiciously like a bill, Esse."

"Of course it is—two pounds one shilling and eightpence for soling and heeling, *et cetera*. But whom on earth is dad's epistle from?"—glancing at the thin foreign paper over which papa was knitting his brows in very perplexed fashion.

He read on for about five minutes, until our patience was well-nigh exhausted, then, laying the letter down, glanced at us with a half comic, half rueful expression."

"Prepare for the worst, my dears," he said then. "I'm not sure whether or not you'll consider this to be the last straw which breaks the camel's back."

"What is it? What is the matter?" we exclaimed in a breath.

"Read it," said papa, passing me the letter; and I read aloud—

"My dear Charles,—You will, no doubt, be much surprised to receive a letter from me after our long silence, and especially a letter written in England; but, after poor Tom's death, India became hateful to me, and I determined to settle all my affairs and return to my native land. I arrived in the spring of this year, after an absence of thirty years, a poor lonely widow whose husband and children all lie in foreign graves. My sorely-tried heart yearned for a little love and sympathy, and I looked forward with an eagerness I cannot express to a sight of the 'old familiar faces.'

"But I had not taken into account the chances and changes of thirty years, and I found myself a stranger where I had hoped to find a home. I went first to the house of my only brother, a wealthy merchant living at Clapham. He seemed pleased enough to see me; but his wife, a fashionable worldly woman, and his children, who are all grown up, looked upon me as an intruder, and took no pains to hide their sentiments. Had they thought me a rich woman, how different would have been their reception of me! For a few months, for my brother's sake, I bore their rudeness and unkind hints; but it became insupportable at last, and I left them for my only remaining relatives—the husband and children of my dead sister.

"Here at first I was received with open arms. An unknown aunt coming from India was a possible mine of wealth, and as such not to be despised. But I am quick at reading faces, and I saw through them at once. They were hard, worldly, shallow, and selfish; and when, after a few weeks, no rich presents had been received, no signs of wealth had been manifested, their cordiality and politeness underwent a rapid change, and I have fared worse here than with my brother's family.

"Now, my dear Charles, you know my utter friendlessness. I have no claims whatever on your kindness or hospitality; but I dare to hope that for Tom's sake you will give his widow a place by your own fireside. My brother told me you had had heavy losses years ago, but I trust fortune has favored you since then. At all events, I shall not be a burden upon you, for I can afford to pay a sufficient sum for my maintenance. Still I know that very few would be found willing to take a poor frail old woman into their family circle without 'great expectations;' and, though I cannot help hoping you will be an exception to my late experiences, I have no right to be disappointed if you refuse. Talk it over with your wife and children, whose acquaintance I am very anxious to make, and let me have, if possible, an early reply.

"This long letter must have tried your patience already; so I will say no more at present, except to present my kindest regards to your wife and family, and to assure you all that I will on no account trespass on your hospitality if I cause you the least inconvenience. I remain, my dear Charles,

"Your affectionate sister,

"MARGARET CLAYTON."

"Well," I exclaimed, with a sort of gasp, laying down the letter, "this is certainly adding insult to injury on the part of Dame Fortune! How, in the name of all that is marvellous, are we to take another into the family when we are on the verge of starvation already?"

"Come, come, Essie," broke in papa—"it is not quite so bad as that. Besides, Margaret says she can pay for her board and lodging."

"Y-e s," I answered doubtfully; "but it's sure not to be much. But who is she, dad? Do you remember her at all?"

"Yes; when I saw her last she was a young girl of two or three and twenty; but thirty years under an Indian sun must have changed her very much."

"Indeed, yes," I said, "but was she nice? We never seem to have heard anything about her."

"No, poor soul!" replied papa. "She cut herself off from all her old friends when she went with Tom to India. Her children all died young, and now poor Tom has gone too," and father's voice grew low and husky as he thought of the wild handsome brother whose bright laughing face, as it looked out upon us from the painted canvas, had been the beau-ideal of our girlish fancies.

"Poor old auntie!" I said gently. "Of course she must come to us. It seems very hard that she should be so lonely and desolate in her old age, doesn't it, daddy?"

"Yes, indeed," returned papa sadly. "But how on earth can we have her here, with two invalids on your hands already?"

"But she is not an invalid, papa?"

"Old people always are, more or less, and, besides, she will want so much attention and waiting upon. They never move hand or foot, if they can help it, in India; and poor little Mollie is almost worn out already."

"Not a bit of it, dad!" said Mollie briskly. "We'll manage somehow. The spare room can be turned into a sitting-room and bed-room combined, and then we sha'n't always be obliged to have her with us;" and Mollie pulled a wry little face.

Everything was soon settled. Mamma and Ethel agreed with us that poor aunt's lot was worse than ours, inasmuch as she had no one to love her or be kind to her in her declining years; and, though we all had a few misgivings as to what changes she might cause in our happy home circle, yet we set to work cheerfully to prepare for her coming.

She certainly had not let the grass grow under her feet. We had received her letter on Tuesday, and now on Friday evening we were expecting her by the 6.30 express.

The fire was burning brightly, and on one side of it, reclining on a sofa, lay poor mamma, with a look of pleased expectation on her sweet worn face. Opposite to her, in a deep arm-chair, sat Ethel, looking still pale and weak, but very lovely too

"Aunt Margaret will think this is a small private hospital," said mamma, smiling as I stooped to arrange her pillows.

"I only hope she won't turn invalid too," I replied. "We have room only for one sofa, and one arm-chair by the fire. I am quite glad it is such a miserable foggy night. It will make our little room look so comfortable by comparison;" and with a good deal of pride I glanced round our snug apartment. "I hope she won't be disappointed."

"I am sure she will not," answered Ethel. "Everything looks so nice and homelike! Besides, papa told her we were poor; so she won't expect anything wonderful."

"Hark!" exclaimed Mollie. "I hear a cab! Is it going past? No, it has stopped here! Go and open the door, Esther."

I threw open the front door, and saw papa assisting a lady to alight. In a minute more he had brought her up to me, and introduced me as his second daughter.

"Take care of your aunt, Esther, while I see after the luggage," he added.

"Welcome to Bristol, aunt Margaret!" I said warmly, holding out both my hands.

"Thank you, my dear," responded a sweet low voice; and, throwing back her thick crape veil, she kissed me affectionately.

Mollie had followed me to the door, and now held out her hand shyly.

"This is our housekeeper and dear little Cinderella," I said. "If you are not comfortable here, aunt Margaret, it will be all Mollie's fault."

Aunt Margaret smiled, and looked into Mollie's clear gray eyes.

"I have no misgivings," she said, kissing her gently; and then we entered the brightly-lit-up parlor.

The tears rushed to aunt Margaret's eyes as she bent over poor mother's sofa; and I think from that moment we all loved her.

"I am so grieved to find you like this," she was saying in her peculiarly sweet voice. "How differently we are all tried in the furnace!"

"Yes, indeed," replied dear mother gently. "The cross comes to us all; but I have much to be grateful for, Margaret;" and she glanced at the dear faces round her.

"You have indeed," returned aunt Margaret, "and I also. Heaven has blessed me with health and strength, though all my loved ones have been taken from me."

"You must let us try to fill their places, auntie," said Ethel softly. "We will all do our best; and I don't think we shall find it hard to love you."

"My dears, you are too good, and I love you all already."

"What—aunt Margaret still with her bonnet on?" broke in papa's hearty voice. "What are you thinking of, girls?"

There was a hurried move, and in a little while we were all heartily discussing our "high tea." It was impossible to feel shy with aunt Margaret. At the end of half an hour we felt as though we had known her all our lives. Sitting on a low chair, after tea, by mamma's sofa, in her long black dress and widow's cap, with soft white lace at her neck and wrists, she made the prettiest picture of an old lady that I had ever seen. Her manners, too, were so winning and graceful that we really forgot all our troubles in looking at her and listening to her delightful conversation. The evening passed away quickly and pleasantly, and, on bidding us good night, aunt Margaret declared that it was the first happy evening she had spent since her husband died.

After she had left us, we were all loud in her praise.

"Such a delightful old dear!" exclaimed Mollie. "Fancy your calling her 'the last straw!'"

"I must tell her that some day," I said laughingly. "But can you ever imagine those other people being so horrid? One look into auntie's sweet sad eyes won my heart."

"And mine too," put in mamma. "I am sure she will be a great help and comfort to us all. She has known much sorrow, and it has taught her to be tender and pitiful to others. I am very glad she has come to us."

The next morning there were three breakfasts to be taken up-stairs, for I had told aunt Margaret that we breakfasted at an unearthly hour, and she was on no account to get up. I did not want her to see that our meal consisted of coffee and bread and butter alone, for of course she must have her cutlet or poached egg. I took up her tray myself, and was amply repaid for my trouble by her bright look of thanks.

"This must not happen again, dear," she said. "I am not usually lazy; but this morning I must confess to feeling a little tired and stiff. How are poor mamma and Ethel?"

I said that neither had had a very good night.

"Poor things! I am so sorry—and I slept so well! What is the matter with Ethel, dear?"

I told her all I knew about it, and that I was afraid she would not get stronger till her mind was more easy.

"She worries so about being idle when we are all so hard up," I explained, "and she grudges herself every mouthful of wine or extra dainty, because she thinks we deprive ourselves of necessaries in order to get them for her. Poor mamma is just the same. Oh, it is a dreadful thing to be poor, is it not?" I ended bitterly. She was poor too, so I felt no shame in speaking of our poverty before her.

"Poor child!" she said softly. "Is it so bad as all this? I had no idea you were really poor; it is a word with such an elastic meaning."

"I suppose ours is what would be called genteel poverty," I remarked, still bitterly. "Dad has been a long time out of employment, and we have never been able to save. It has been up-hill work all our lives; but we have never been so badly off as now."

"And yet without hesitation you added another to your many burdens! My child, what am I to say to you?"

The blood rushed to my cheeks. I felt overwhelmed with shame when I thought of what she might have inferred from my heedless complaints.

"Oh, aunt Margaret, what must you think of me? You know we are all delighted to have you. You could not be a burden to us. Indeed we feel that you will be our greatest help and comfort—mamma said so, and it is quite, quite true!"

"Dear child, I did not misunderstand you. Your welcome last night was too genuine to be doubted; but, all the same, you have done what few would do without hopes of reward; and may Heaven grant that your recompense may be tenfold!"

"We have done nothing, aunt Margaret," I said lightly, for there were tears in her voice.

"You have done more than you know, my child," and she smiled slightly. "You have healed a wounded heart and restored my faith in human nature."

When I went afterwards to remove the tray and wish her good morning before starting on the "tread-mill," as Mollie called it, she laid three pounds in my hand.

"You know, dear, I told you I could pay for my maintenance. I will give you this sum every Saturday."

"But, aunt Margaret," I gasped, in astonishment, "it is a great deal too much. I—we thought you might perhaps give us ten shillings a week."

"You understood that I was very poor too—eh, Esther? Who told you so?"

"I really don't know. We all thought so from your letter, I fancy."

"And yet, like good Samaritans, you took pity on the friendless traveler. Well, dear, I am not so poor but that I can afford to pay you a fair sum in return for the trouble I cause."

With a light heart I rushed downstairs and showed the glittering coins to Mollie, who, after a short stare of incredulity, executed a war-dance round the kitchen, with a tea-cup in one hand and a cloth in the other.

When I came home there were other surprises in store for me. A hamper of old port and a basket of game had arrived in the afternoon for the use of the invalids.

"The fairies have come back to this prosaic world of ours," laughed Ethel, as I opened my eyes at sight of the unaccustomed luxuries.

"One fairy has, I think," said mamma; and I put my arms round aunt Margaret's neck and kissed her.

"I have some good news too," I remarked by-and-by. "I 'broke up' today for three weeks' holiday."

Every one was pleased, Mollie gave me her usual hug and half strangled me.

"Oh, sha'n't we have fun? I do hope it will freeze, and we will skate all day long."

"You dissipated young woman! And who is to take care of the house, I should like to know, and wait on poor mamma?"

"Ah, that is my secret!" said Mollie, looking delightfully mysterious. "Cinderella is metamorphosed, and no longer sitteth among the ashes!"—and with great dignity, she drew herself up, and, walking over to the bell, rang it.

"Will your godmother condescend to answer it?" I asked, laughing; but, if she had really done so, I do not think I should have been more astonished than I was at the apparition of a neat rosy-cheeked maid in orthodox cap and white frilled apron, who actually opened the door in answer to the summons.

"You can bring in the tea now Mary," said Mollie, with the new gravity that sat so oddly on her small dimpled face; and the vision disappeared.

I rubbed my eyes, while they all laughed heartily.

"What does it mean? Am I really dreaming, or has old Mrs. Baker been rejuvenated by your godmother's magic?"—Mrs. Baker was the ancient who came for an hour or two every day to do the hardest part of the housework

"Wasn't it a joke?" laughed Mollie delightedly. "You did look so taken in! It was as good as a play!"

The entrance of that maiden with the tea-equipage prevented my further enlightenment for the present; but later on I learnt that early in the afternoon aunt Margaret and Mollie had started on a mysterious expedition, which the latter now expatiated on with the greatest glee. Their destination was a registry-office, and there they were lucky in finding a young girl with an excellent character, who took their fancy at once by her pleasant face and neat appearance. Fortunately she was able to enter on her new duties at once, and had been installed in Cinderella's department a short time before my return.

There were still five days remaining before Christmas; but they passed like a dream. We could scarcely believe in our own identity. A fortnight before we felt utterly crushed under our troubles; now we scarcely felt that we had any. "The last straw" which was to break our backs had, on the contrary, charmed the load away. Aunt Margaret had taken the two invalids completely under her care.

On the morning preceding Christmas Day we were all breakfasting together, except mamma, when the postman's knock was heard. There was only one letter, and that was for Ethel, who blushed rosily when she saw the handwriting.

"Paul is coming to Bristol for a few days, papa; he wants to know if he may call on us," she said shyly.

"Certainly, my dear; I shall be most happy to make his acquaintance," returned papa cordially. "When is he coming down?"

"To-day, I believe," said Ethel, blushing more than ever. "He asked me to send him a line to the Clarendon this evening."

"I'm so glad!" exclaimed Mollie and I together. "Oh, Ethel, how delightful for you!"

But Ethel, excusing herself with a murmured something about mamma, beat a hasty retreat.

"Who is this wonderful Paul," asked aunt Margaret, "that excites so much commotion?"

"Paul is a doctor—Doctor Farrell—and he is engaged to Ethel, and he is, oh, so handsome, and we've never seen him!" explained Mollie breathlessly.

"Gently, Miss Chatterbox!" interposed papa, smiling. "No one else can get a word in edge-ways. The fact is, Margaret, there is no engagement at all. They are both poor, and Ethel would not allow him to tie himself down by any promise to her. He was the assistant doctor at Marleigh, where Ethel has been living these last three years; but six months ago he passed his final examination with great success, and obtained a better practice in London. He came that very evening, just as we were sitting down to tea. Ethel introduced him with a mixture of shyness and pride which was very pretty to see, and in a very short time we were all quite at home with him.

He was decidedly a gentleman, every inch of him, and very pleasant to look upon, though by no means "a young Greek god." He was as dark as Ethel was fair, with a clear olive skin, dark eyes, and a firm well-cut mouth.

Ethel for the remainder of the evening was like a person transfigured. Mollie and I watched her in a kind of awe-struck wonder, and thought what a marvellous thing it must be to be in love. When she was going to bed, aunt Margaret kissed her fondly and stroked the flushed cheeks.

"I like your Paul very much," she said kindly; "he looks good and true, dear, and worthy of our 'Blue-bell'"—for so auntie had named our graceful blue-eyed darling.

After tea we all drew our chairs round the fire to listen to aunt Margaret's story. The curtains were drawn, the gas was turned low, and only the ruddy firelight lit up our expectant faces.

"Is it a ghost-story?" asked Mollie eagerly. "It is just the time for a real, thrilling, horrible ghost;" and she nestled on the hearthrug close to aunt's chair.

"I'm afraid you will be disappointed, Mollie," said aunt Margaret, smiling, "for my story is not at all horrible or thrilling; but there may be ghosts in it. I mean to lay them to-night;" and she sighed a little, and looked wistfully into the fire; then, rousing herself, she said briskly, "Now, before I begin my story, I must make one stipulation; no one must interrupt me, not even to say, 'Oh, aunt Margaret!'"—and she looked mischievously at Mollie. "Is it a compact?"

"Yes!" we all cried heartily.

"Very well then—I will begin; but, remember, no interruptions are allowed.

"There was once an old lady who had lived for many years abroad—no matter as to the exact locality; her children had died when they were very young; and, when her husband also was taken from her, she went back to her native land. After thirty years of exile, she felt an unspeakable yearning to hear once more the voices of her kindred and look again upon her childhood's home. But thirty years is half a lifetime, and she came back to find friends and kindred dead or changed. Her old home was in the hands of strangers, and there was not a face she knew in her native village. Sad and desolate, she went to the only relatives she had left, hoping to find among their large families some one she could love, and who would take the place of the children she had lost; but there not one! Knowing the power of wealth and the mercenary spirit of the age, she had allowed her relatives to think her poor. With them—hard, worldly, successful people—poverty was a crime not to be forgiven. Where the rich old lady would have been *feted* and caressed, the poor one was despised and naturally enough she began to doubt whether Christian charity or disinterested kindness existed in the nineteenth century.

"But she determined to make one effort more. She had proved all her own relatives, and they were found wanting. There remained a brother of her husband's, whom she had seen only twice in her life; he was married, she heard, and had several children; but her grand relatives knew little of them. Perhaps this was in their favor; at all events, it was with a gleam of hope that she wrote to her brother-in-law, letting her poverty be again inferred, and asking for a home in her lonely old age. By return of post an answer came, and such an answer as could have been written only by a noble-hearted gentleman. He and all his family sent her a hearty welcome, and promised her a large share of their love and sympathy. They were not rich, he said, and could not offer her any luxuries; but such as they had she was truly welcome to share. Through the whole letter there was such a wring of truth that the heart of the poor old woman beat with joy, for she felt that she had found at last what she had so long vainly sought.

"She was not long in going to them; and her hopes were more than realized. They were indeed poor—far poorer than she had thought—and many cares and troubles were pressing heavily upon them; yet, like the good Samaritan, they took in the weary stranger, and poured into her wounds the oil of ready sympathy and the wine of generous love. Since then she has watched them day by day, and her admiration has grown with every hour. She has seen the father, whose life for the last twenty years has been one long struggle against misfortune, bravely carrying a bold front before the world, with ever a cheery word and smile for his wife and children; she has seen the delicate mother patiently bearing her pains and sufferings, and repressing every possible sign of them, lest they should add to the already heavy burdens of her dear ones; and she has seen the children flitting like sunbeams through the house, always busy, always cheerful, always unselfish. She has known them all but a very short time, yet she cannot wait any longer; she needs no further proof of their sterling worth.

"My dear ones"—and aunt Margaret smiled into our bewildered tearful faces—"I am not a poor woman at all, but a very rich one. Your uncle was not successful at first, in the days when he still kept up a correspondence with the old country, and so arose the mistake as to my poverty, which I was careful never to explain away; but, after our children died, and we cared nothing for money, Fortune, ever capricious, favored us wonderfully.

"But even I had no idea of the amount of my husband's wealth till his property was realised before my return to England last year. Everything had been left to me unconditionally; and, half afraid of my responsibility, I resolved to test my relatives carefully, lest I should leave the money in undeserving hands.

"You know what the result has been—how falsely the metal has rung in so many instances, and how I have found the true gold at last. Nay, not a word!"—as my father and mother strove to speak. "You promised not to interrupt me, and my story is almost ended. There is no necessity to enter into business details to-night; but I should like to give you a sketch of my plans, and see whether you approve. First, I thought of buying a pretty house somewhere in the country, where the sweet fresh air might bring the color into Mabel's cheeks—looking fondly at my mother—"and where the girls could ride about, and have their rose gardens and strawberry beds and such like. You would find enough to do, Charles, in acting as my steward; for of course I shall want a little ground about the house. Then Mollie and Esther must have their season in town, and I will see that their faces are not their only fortunes.

"I have left you out in the cold, Ethel, because I think Fate holds other things in store for you. At all events, I mean to give you ten thousand pounds on your wedding-day; and I have a nice little brougham which is just the thing for a doctor. Do you think you could help me to choose a horse?"

* * * *

A year has passed since that never-to-be-forgotten night, and our wildest dreams have been realized. Paul and Ethel are married, and are as happy as mortals can be. Early in the spring there is to be a gay wedding in the village church, and a certain Cuthbert Vernon is to carry me away to the stately seat that we can see amid the tall trees about a mile away.

"I know there are very few aunt Margarets in the world," Mollie remarks wisely; "but there must be many people as badly off as we were, and it may do good to remind them that there is always a silver lining to the cloud, though it may be a long time in showing itself."

"I am afraid ours sounds a very wild improbable story," I say; "but I only wish, for others' sakes, that it were a more common one."

"At all events," returns Mollie mischievously, "it will impress upon people the fact that mortals are very short-sighted, for you must admit you were rather mistaken in calling aunt Margaret THE LAST STRAW."

### Curious Piece of Music.

In the library of Sir John Goss, recently sold in London, was a transcript of a forty part song composed about 1575 by Thomas Trails. Commenting on this fact, it is remarked that "to the majority of musicians of the present day the composition of such a piece would be a feat involving too much patience to be seriously entertained, and even among the works of composers of the old-fashioned school only one piece of musical mosaic work of such elaborateness is known, so far as we are aware." Works of this character are not numerous, but the writer of the quoted words might have known that at about the time of Tallis the harmonists of England and the continent were much given to such exhibitions of ingenuity. In a last century essay on the church music of that era we read: "I am speaking of an age when everything was scholastic; when there were schoolmen in music as well as in letters, and when if learning had its Aquinas and Smigleccius, music had its Master Giles and its Dr. Bull, who could split the seven notes of music into as many divisions as the others could split the ten categories of Aristotle. A descant of thirty-eight proportions of sundry kinds was the wonderful work of Maistre Giles; but Dr. Bull could produce to the astonished reader (not hearer, for the hearer would know nothing of the matter) a piece of harmony of full forty parts."

—In the English Civil Service there are 3,260 women clerks.

—Ireland has ten theatres.

—The number of children under 15 in Germany is 16,016,045.

### Key to Afghanistan.

The city of Herat stands on the Heri river, on the slope of the Hindoo Koosh, in the northwest corner of Afghanistan. Due north, at a distance of about 230 miles, is Merv; due east, at a distance of nearly 400 miles, is Cabul, considerably to the southeast, and almost equidistant from Cabul and Herat, is Candahar. The main route, and, so far as is known, the only road by which a large force could be moved from Cabul to Herat, runs through Candahar. From Candahar to Herat is about 300 miles in a direct line; the road, however, is not very direct, and for military purposes the distance may be called 350 miles. The road from Merv is so nearly straight as to be less than 250 miles long; it is a good one, being at its worst part, where it crosses the Hazrat-Baba Pass, about thirty miles north of Herat, practicable for all arms of the service. It traverses a fertile country, and runs for a great part of its length along the valley of the river Kushk, so that supplies and water are everywhere abundant. Whenever the race for Herat begins, if there is a fair start, the Russians should get down the perpendicular I from Merv before the English can get up the thick side of the V from Candahar. It is not probable, however, as shown below, that the Russian advance will be from the Merv quarter.

The position occupied by Herat, on the high road between India and Persia, the centre spot of an extensive and fertile valley, well watered by channels made from a perennial stream, marks her out as the natural garden and granary of Central Asia. It is situated in a plain about 2,500 feet above the sea, and is fortified with mud walls, presenting the form of a square, each side of which is something under a mile in length. The streets are ill-built, narrow and dirty. "Only man is vile" at Herat, however, for nature has done everything for the city and its environs. The climate is the finest in Asia; only two months of the twelve are hot, and even then the mercury rarely rises above 85 deg in the shade. The nights are always cool, often cold. The Heratis have a proverb, "If the soil of Ispahan, the cool breezes of Herat, and the waters of Khwarizan were in the same place, there would be no such thing as death." The waters of the Heri, Conolly described in 1831 as the best he ever tasted, and the fruits as the most delicious in flavor. The soil is extraordinarily fertile, and the orchards, gardens, corn-fields and vineyards stretch to the mountains, four miles away on the north and twelve on the south, and along the valley as far as the eye can reach. There are extensive mines of iron and lead, only worked at the surface, and the scimitars of Herat are as famous in Central Asia as its horses. Silk is spun there largely, and carpets of wool and silk are manufactured. The other articles of export are manna, assafœtida, gum, saffron, and pistachio nuts. Half a century ago it paid an annual revenue of $450,000 and Malleson declares that under British rule the income from the Government to the district would suffice to pay the expenses of garrisoning the chief cities of Afghanistan. Foster, who visited Herat in 1783, described the city as far surpassing Candahar in the extent of its markets and the volume of its trade. Christie, who spent a month there in disguise in 1810, is as loud as Connolly in his praise of its delightful situation, brisk business and phenomenal fertility.

### The Break-O'-Day President.

Unlike most men of his build, President Cleveland requires very little sleep. The stories are very plenty here of visitors to the Executive Mansion, Albany N. Y., who have stayed up until 1 o'clock or 2 o'clock in the morning with the Governor, and then at 6 o'clock in the morning have been awakened from a half-completed rest by sounds of heavy footsteps and of whistling, to peep out of their rooms and see the Governor before his lookin-glass shaving himself and whistling as cheerily as a schoolboy. Once shaved and fully dressed, the Governor would then let himself quietly out of the front door and stride away beyond the city's outskirts for his daily constitutional, in the company of the rattling milk-carts and the belated truck farmers on their way to the city markets. In a small circle of intimates he was known as "the break-o'-day Governor.

Four or five hours' sleep and three light and entirely plain meals a day fill out the programme requisite with him for good health and buoyant spirits, and in pursuing the course he has begun in Washington he will be following his natural bent. He will miss the walk to and from the Capitol six times a day, to which he has been accustomed, and he may miss it so greatly as to make a new departure in Washington. In former times, before Lincoln was President, the Chief Magistrate had the entire White House to himself and his household, and his work and that of his secretary were performed in rooms set apart for the purpose in the Capitol. President Cleveland may return to that practice, not only because it will afford him exercise, and, more important still, enable him to use the White House as a resting-place and a retreat, but also because under the present arrangement there is not sufficient room for an ordinary houshold there. When President Arthur desired to entertain friends, he was obliged to send them to a hotel at night; and it is understood, and it is probably true, that not all the servants could be accommodated under the White House roof. In Mr. Lincoln's time the great apartment into which callers were ushered and the smaller one now used by the private secretary were taken from the household either to free the President from daily and frequent exposure to hostile persons in the streets or for some reason that is probably non-existent now.

### Tobacco.

There isn't a leaf of tobacco grown on the Island of Key West. It all comes from Cuba, and is manufactured into cigars, which ought for all reasons to be as good as those of Havana, but for some mysterious cause they are not. There is supposed to be some fragrant potency in the air of Havana which gives cigars a flavor they can get in no other locality, but what it is and why its charm does not exist elsewhere neither the tobacconist nor meteorologist can explain. Tobacco grown from the same stock, manufactured by the same men in the same way, has a different flavor, or bouquet, as they call it, if rolled into cigars in Key West from that it has if done up in Havana.

### Two Queer Trades.

There exists in London a gentleman who makes his whole income by mixing salads. A few minutes before the commencement of a dinner party he drives up in a hansom and proceeds to the mixing of the ingredients, which are ready prepared for him. In a short time the salad is finished, it is placed on the table, it is an incredible successs. Such an ethereal concoction seems as if it cannot have been made by hands, but rather as if it hovered between two hemispheres, partaking of both while belonging to neither. The greater part of the materials are found for him; some he uses, some it seems good to him to reject, but it is surmised that he must bring with him some singular flavoring or mysterious herb which gives to the salad its magical flavor. Any way, the salad is a success; the maker pockets a guinea fee, and flies off in another hansom—possibly to dream of inventing another salad. No one has ever seen the salad-maker at work. He demands perfect solitude for his artistic employment, and he has a preference for silence while it is going on. He has a bland, mysterious, and almost unctuous expression, which seems somehow to suggest a person who takes especial delight in the mixing of oil. He has a manner so quietly polite, so calm and self-contained, as perfectly to baffle any inquiry which could be put to him as to his history or the secret of his trade. Were his hostess to be even as impetuous as the "Princess" in *Der Asra*, she would get no information out of the salad-maker. The apostrophe, 'Tell me quickly, what thy name and what thy country?" would meet with no response beyond an oily smile, a deprecatory bow, and a gentle shrug of the shoulders. In what country he discovered the secret of his salad, whether there is a secret at all or whether the flavor lies in the faith of the partaker, where he lives when he is at home, and what he does when he is not making salad—all these things are mysteries, and will never be known during the life-time of the salad-maker.

Not to be mentioned in the same breath with the salad-maker, yet having a certain affinity with him through the mysteriousness of his occupation, is the professional beetle-hunter. He also demands to work in secret, he also demands a fee, but his manner (unlike that of the salad-maker) is somewhat grim and unresponsive. He will come whenever you send for him, and will rid your house of the intruders instantaneously, but what he rather prefers is to be paid by the year and to come whenever he thinks fit. For a small annual sum—30s. or thereabouts, if the writer's memory does not deceive him—he will undertake that not a single beetle shall be seen in your establishment during the time it is under his care. He appears particularly to like the air of respectability which is given him by this yearly income, considering himself probably as getting thereby into the position of a person with rents coming in, and who might even have to pay income-tax one of these days. What is the subtle communication which exists between him and the beetle, and how he does his spiriting, is as deep a mystery as the great salad question spoken of above. Like the salad-maker, he allows no witness to his performances, and the manner of them must ever remain a matter for conjecture. He comes at night, in the storm or the rain, but what he does, no one knows. Probably he is a kind of successor to the Pied Piper of Hamlin, and parades the basement playing on a pipe, by which he lures his victims to destruction.

### Age For Legal Marriage.

In the different European states there is considerable variation in the age at which a legal marriage can be contracted. In Austria the age of discretion is 14 years. In Hungary each religous sect maker its own regulations—marriages being regarded as entirely ecclesiastical affairs. Russians can contract marriage at the age of 18 in case of females. The Italian law fixes the age at 18 and 15 respectively. In Turkey there is no general law. The French and Belgian codes allow marriages of young men at eighteen and girls at 15 years, but the powers of dispensation in special cases are reserved. In Greece, Spain and Portugal, parties of 14 and 12 can contract a binding marriage, but in the country the consent of the parents is necessary. According to the amended paragraph of the civil marriage bill, the state of wedlock cannot be entered upon under 20 and 16 years respectively though the existing laws of of Prussia and Saxony permitted marriages at earlier periods. There is much dissimilarity in the Swiss laws, every canton having a regulations of its own. In some of them the consent of the parents is necessary up to 25 years. The influence of climate upon the temperaments and constitution is allowed in the southern nations, where maturity is reached at a much earlier period than among the northern nations.

### The Richest Heiress in America.

Miss Nellie Gould, the very charming and accomplished 18-year-old daughter of Mr. Jay Gould, who is reported as soon to wed the partner of her father, Mr. Washington E. Connor, is one of the brightest and sweetest little ladies in New York City. She has been finely educated and is highly accomplished. She is an artist of no mean ability, and her collection of bric-a brac, which has been adorned by her pencil and brush, has been greatly admired. She dresses plainly but richly, and when in town can be seen any afternoon driving through the park with her brother George and "Wash" by her side. She has attended one or two private germans, but cannot be said to have entered the gay society whirl. She is quite reserved, and to a certain extent retiring, traits strongly characteristic of her father, the king of Wall street. She is probably the richest heiress in America and on her father's death will come in for $20,000,000 or $30,000,000.

### Pug.

One of the most valuable employes in the office of the Valley Railroad at Cleveland is a diminutive dog whose name of "Pug" likewise defines his breed. His perfect points leave no room for doubt that his blood is of the bluest, and that his ancestors were familiar with palaces. But, however, aristocratic his lineage he takes a genuine pride in honest toil, and, moreover, has done much to vindicate his race from the cnarge of stupidity. His chief duty is the carrying of bills, letters and despatches from one office to another. If the recipient of any document delays to give him a receipt showing that it has been safely delivered he utters a loud complaint, to which immediate attention must be paid.

## NEWS IN BRIEF.

—Paris has 1,026 ballot dancers.

—Jews own more than 1,250,000 acres of Russian land.

—Ohio has thirty-five colleges and leads the country.

—England consumes five times as much tea as coffee.

—Russia is to construct railways throughout Siberia.

—The Bank of England now covers three acres of ground.

—Denmark spends $55,000 a year for agricultural teaching.

—San Diego, Cal, exported 1,108,000 pounds of fish last year.

—Australia has four universities equal to Yale or Harvard.

—Sixty-four women engravers earn their livelihood in England.

—Sugar is reported to be selling at two cents a pound in Cuba.

—Helena, M.T., has a calf 10 months old that weighs 950 pounds.

—The annual revenue of the British government is £210,000,000.

—Esquimaux dogs will draw a sledge a distance of 60 miles a day.

—There are 7,162 women missionaries and preachers in England.

—American steam brakes are used by French and English railroads.

—Rabbits damage Australia to the extent of $10 000,000 per year.

—Farm rents in England have declined six per cent. in five years.

—There are 600 professional beauties in London who don't work at all.

—There are 452 women editors in England and 1,309 photographers.

—Every member of the Texas Land Board is said to favor its abolition.

—One town in North Carolina shipped last year 103,000,000 cigarettes.

—The postal cards sold in this country last year numbered 362,876,750.

—The number of postoffice clerks in the United States is placed at 8,240.

—San Francisco has 1,000 Chinese children ineligible to public schools.

—Not a solitary young man in Oglethorpe, Ga., it is said, chews tobacco.

—Barnum says his show took in $1,400,000 during the past tenting season.

—In Baltimore recently, 100,000 cases of canned corn were sold in one day.

—A Massachusetts physician has induced forty young men to stop smoking.

—There are 558 persons engaged in the Postoffice Department at Washington.

—Kit Carson's monument at Santa Fe is to be unveiled on Decoration Day.

—There are 112,905 English school teachers, nearly all of whom are spinsters.

—There were 3,253 postoffices established last year, and 1,621 were discontinued.

—A pearl has been found on the western Australian coast valued at $20,000.

—The Queen is worth $85,000,000 and works harder than any woman in the kingdom.

—A gentleman of Rockingham, N. C., has a pair of elks that he drives to buggy.

—The fiber of the hop vine is substituted for rags by French paper manufacturers.

—Nearly $2,000,000 worth of printing ink is used in the United States every year.

—A reversible boot, which may be worn indifferently on either foot, has been patented.

—Ten thousand five hundred women and English books and 2,302 assist in printing them.

—The number of postoffices robbed last year was 467, while 287 others were destroyed by fire.

—There were 468 postmasters who died last year, while there were 705 who were suspended.

—Winnipeg, Man., has 912 trading establishments, doing an annual business of $23,000,000.

—The number of farmers in State Legislatures is said to be decreasing from year to year.

—The number of postal notes issued last year was 3,689,237, amounting in money to $7,411,992 48.

—The fire record for 1884 shows losses in the United States and Canada to the extent of $112,000,000.

—By a small majority the Trustees