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Despair.

A woman's figure it is,
Outlined 'gainst the cold, somber rock,
Where the desolate sea-mews flock,
And the stones and the water-lips kiss.

Grayer than rock or than sky,
The dress of that woman up there;
Chiller than wave or than air
The hands as enfolded they lie.

Hopeless the fixed, open eyes,
Dry as with agony old,
Dumb as with secret untold—
Dead to all change or surprise,

Mute as winds are to-day,
The lips with their curves of despair;
And the gold of that cold woman's hair
Mocks a face that is ashen and gray.

A face where all joy has been slain,
Where passion and life have burned out;
Where the ashes of love lie about
Scattered over a desert of rain.

She sits on that cold, barren shore
Till the tide rises high at her feet;
Till the stones and the wave-kisses meet—
Till the day and its blankness are o'er,

No sign as of heart raging strife—
No cry parts the mute frozen lips,
As the desolate night o'er her slips,
And she, rising, goes back to her life.

SWEETENED BITTERNESS.

The town is ringing with the very startling news of Lady Mary Chetwode's elopement.

That she, the beautiful, highly-gifted, accomplished woman, sister of their respected lord, should bring such disgrace upon the ever-stainless name of Chetwode is abhorrent to it.

If it had been anyone but Sir Harry Blake things might have been different, as well as forgotten and forgiven, but the circumstances are really too awful.

"A married man!" So wails the county, as they lift up their eyes and clasp their hands as if in despair, when in reality half of them rejoice in the thought that this brilliant beauty has disappeared from their midst, giving a chance to their faded daughters; and the expectant widows, how they inwardly laughed in their joy!

"Poor Lady Mary!" says Lady Charteris while speaking to her husband a few days after the affair. "Who would have thought it?"

"Depend upon it, my dear, everybody knows their own business best," answers Sir Charles. "Change of air is beneficial to every one."

"I wonder you can talk with such levity, Charles! Change of air, indeed!" And, gathering up her skirts, my lady glides with much dignity from the room.

Sir Charles leans back with a sigh of decided relief as the door closes.

"These ugly women," he says, "how they love a scandal—especially when it's about a pretty woman! Pretty, did I say?—egad, she is a queen!"

That Lady Mary should be condemned on all sides goes without telling.

How long she had struggled against her fate, and how vainly, with all her woman's wit, had she attempted to evade the urgent appeals made by Sir Harry from day to day!

Poor love, more sinned against than sinning, how hopelessly had she tried to hide her unconquerable love! All her inward wrestling told for her not at all.

It was of no avail; Sir Harry was merciless—when were the Blakes otherwise? Seeing the depth of her affection, he worked upon her sensitive nature and truly loving heart, and, with many flattering words and highly romantic speeches, played out his part in the drama of her life, and imploring her to fly with him, at last gained her consent.

One memorable night, while all the household were sleeping, two people stepped from the library of Chetwode Manor, and went forth to meet their doom.

Alas! how soon one of them felt its bitterness! "Truly evil is wrought by want of thought."

Would Sir Harry have been so recklessly happy if he could have seen into the future? I think not. Surely he would have hesitated before he had taken that fatal step, and ponder ere he made her untarnished name the topic of public conversation. But there are many such, who forget how miserable are the effects of their selfishness, and remember not that "the evil men do lives after them."

The alarm is raised far and near, for many and many a mile. From Chetwode grooms are sent out on every side to each adjacent station for tidings of the missing beauty.

Her brother, Lord Chetwode, is distracted. He can neither eat nor rest. It is indeed as if his one ewe-lamb had been stolen from its fold, and had left an empty space, never to be refilled for him, unless she returns soon and alone. And then, should this be so, he will open his arms to receive her, and the past shall be forgotten by them both as if it had never been; but if disappointed in this hope, he will follow them from place to place, he tells himself, and have revenge upon Sir Harry, whose treachery makes him tremble with suppressed rage.

There is so little comfort in remembering how lovable she was, and charming. Unfortunately, "praising what is lost, makes the memory of it more dear," far dearer than when we possessed it.

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The lamps are gleaming, voices are low and hushed.

The gamblers are busy round the tables. Some are flushed with excess of luck; others, with ashen faces, are throwing down their last coin; and as they see it swept in by the rake of the croupier, rise from the tabla, and trying to assume utter carelessness, leave the room, perhaps to seek death outside.

Lounging into the gold-room, his thoughts far from the scene before him, Lord Chetwode at a distance sees Blake.

Sir Harry does not see him.

He is laughing merrily, and has undoubtedly been drinking heavily.

"I say, Rawson," he says, "I won that. Did you see? Another slice like that would set me straight. Shall I risk it again for a heavier sum, and cry double or quits?"

Lord Chetwode walks quickly to the table, lays his hand on Blake's shoulder, and says, "Pardon me if I wish to be quits with you first. We will go outside, that we may be quite alone."

Blake rises steadying himself as he does so, and, haggard from shame and remorse, follows Lord Chetwode from the room to the gardens outside.

For a wonder, they are deserted. No sound breaks the stillness of the night. Far up above, the moon is shedding a tender radiance over the sinful earth beneath.

"Villain, where is my sister?" Lord Chetwode says to him passionately.

"I decline to tell you."

"I warn you not to tempt me too far!"

"Sir, the Blakes were never cowards to be frightened by a threat."

"Then I am to understand that you refuse to allow me to rescue my sister from the abyss of sin into which you have so remorselessly plunged her?"

"Not so fast, my friend; your sister is quite content."

But before he has time to complete his sentence, Lord Chetwode grasps his revolver, and taking aim, fires deliberately at him. The bullet passes through his heart, and Blake, flinging his arms wildly into the air, falls heavily to the ground.

Not a word escapes him, and when he is discovered later on, life is quite extinct.

* * * * * *

Lord Chetwode makes his way as one in a dream to his hotel. Going upstairs, he hurries along the corridor, seeking his own room. The door next to his happens to be open, and in his agitation mistaking it for his own, he walks in, not discovering his mistake till the figure of a woman seated at a distant table recalls him to himself.

The woman, rising gently, turns toward him.

As she does so, a faint cry escapes her, and she clutches eagerly at the chair near her, as though desirous of support. Chetwode, going up, seizes her by the arm. It is his sister—Lady Mary Chetwode!

"John," she cries, piteously stretching out her hands, "Why are you here?"

And taking a step forward, she sinks fainting to the ground.

Lifting her gently, Chetwode places her on the sofa; and as he gazes on her beautiful face, now marked with sorrow and suffering, all his love for her returns, and pressing his lips to her forehead, he murmurs, brokely, tenderly, "My poor, poor girl!"

Presently she recovers consciousness; and, shrinking from him, buries her face once more in the pillows of the sofa.

Quietly gaining possession of her hands, he says, tenderly, "Dearest Mary, look up. My heart is full of love for you! Let us forget the past."

"It is impossible!" she says bitterly. Then anxiously and eagerly, she cries. "You have met? Where is he? Oh, what do I see in your face? It cannot be that you have killed him?"

"It is even so!" Chetwode replies.

"Oh, miserable wretch that I am!" she cries, wildly. "First I ruin myself, and now you, through me, have become an assassin!"

"Mary," Chetwode says firmly, "calm yourself. Can't you realize that while he lived there could be no hope for you? I had looked forward to the slaying of him since the day he stole you from me. It is but right that he should answer for his sin in that other world, as he could not atone for it in this."

"You have broken my heart!" she says, sobbing bitterly.

"Only to save your soul, Mary. Think no more of one so utterly base, degraded, and unworthy!"

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Days and weeks pass, during which time Mary's life lies in the balance. Fever ensuing from her overwrought brain, brings her to death's door; but with tender care and careful nursing she rallies, and then, when the doctors permit (Lord Chetwode making the necessary arrangements,) they start for Biarritz, where Lady Mary wishes to seclude herself for some time. She looks even more lovely in her misery.

She assumes a false name, and for several years keeps entirely from the world, leading a very solitary life.

But can a lovely woman hide forever? No; and a pity indeed could it be so.

"DEAREST JOHN:—I hope you do not attribute my long silence to forgetfulness—in that you would be very wrong. I had nothing to tell you, my life being very much the same from day to day. Beyond helping the poor in this parish and attending church I do literally nothing. But even in this, John dear, I have been singularly unfortunate. Hugh Maberly (our rector) has chosen to fall in love with your poor Mary, and only yesterday asked me to be his wife. How could I dare link my wretched life with his pure and perfect one and be happy? And yet if I lose him I lose all that would make existence endurable! Give me your advice. He loves me with all his heart. Am I to break it?"

"MY DEAR MARY:—I have just read your welcome letter, with mingled feelings of surprise and pleasure. If this man loves you as you say, go to him and confess all.

"Your loving brother,
"JOHN."

When Mary receives this she is anxious, miserable, and grateful. She kisses her letter, then cries over it; then remembering how soon she will have to make her horrid confession, she flings herself upon her bed and gives way to passionate weeping for some time.

She has only one hour to recover herself before Hugh Maberly comes for his answer.

She goes down to the drawing-room, and seats herself on a low chair by the fire, and remains wrapt in thought, till Thompson, the footman, announces, "Mr. Maberly."

When Mary sees him, she advances to meet him, looking so white and nervous that Hugh, taking both her willing hands, asks anxiously, "Are you ill?"

"A little," Mary gasps. "I shall be better soon. I have been thinking about a sad story of a woman I knew, and it has overcome me—that is all." And then, fearing he may say the words she knows must come sooner or later, she plunges at once into her confession.

"You have heard, no doubt that pitiable story of Lady Mary Chetwode?"

"I have. I always pitied her."

"Did you? Her sin was very great."

"It was. Therefore the more to be lamented."

"She was a wretched woman."

"Why, Mary, I thought you were more charitable. Could you not be sorry for one who must have suffered so much?"

"I could; I am! I have been sorry for her all my life!" cries Mary, passionately.

"There, that is what I would have expected from you!" Hugh exclaims, rising and taking both her hands in his.

"Expect nothing from me!" she cries, excitedly. "I am one black sheep in your flock! Oh, Hugh, forgive me! I am that woman!"

There is no answer for a moment. Hugh only clasps her hands the tighter and at last he speaks.

"My love, I have known this ever since we first met. I stretched out my hands to help you and they have guided you straight into my heart. Mary—a heart that shall adore you while it beats, and has never beaten for any other. Can you forgive my not telling you of this before, and come to me, to bless my life by being my true and faithful wife?"

"Oh, Hugh! my whole life is in your hands! I love you dearly; but will you never have bitter thoughts of me?"

"Mary, you have sweetened all bitterness by your confession."

And, with hands clasped, these two gaze into each other's eyes, in which they see love, happiness, and perfect trust; and for all time they pledge themselves to each other.

Superstition in Alaska

A belief in the presence of evil spirits constitutes the only religious ideas among the Mutes. There are among them individuals called toonrachs, corresponding to the shaman of the Siberian tribes. If a person is sick before the whaling season commences, or a child is born before going on a journey or building a house the services of the shaman is called in requisition. The modus operandi in every case is very similar. The shaman, after a long spell of silence, suddenly begins to roll his eyes, convulsive shakes pervade his frame and he gives utterance to various groans and sighs intermingled with sentences pertaining to the subject upon which he is engaged. During the time of his performance a continuous beating upon a drum is kept up. Toward the end paroxysms, or rather convulsions of exultation similar to what have been described as prevailing at the finale of a Shaker meeting are exhibited by the shaman. Froth exudes from his mouth, his eyes glare and rolls, and his whole frame is contorted. Perspiration pours from his face, and he is entirely exhausted. The loud invocations to the evil spirits to vacate the body of the sick person, or to drive them away from the sea to enable the whales or seals to arrive, become gradually subdued, dying away into incoherent mutterings. Then after a while he regains his composure, complacently smokes his pipe, and receives his pay for services performed. *If* the operation is performed over a sick person, and recovery does not ensue, the payment made is returned, a custom that might might be advantageously adopted among civilized persons.

Some curious superstitions are also to be noted. If a person is sick, iron tools, such as axes or knives, can not be used in the house. Upon a man's grave his sled is placed, but broken to pieces, and his kyack meets similar usage. Furs, spears and rifles are also deposited; while, if the individual has killed many whales, the long jaw-bones of the balaena are placed in an upright position to mark the spot. These people bury their dead upon the ground, raising a number of pieces of driftwood in the shape of a tent over the remains. Owing to this insecure mode of burial the wood soon fall adown and affords entrance to foxes and dogs, who make havoc with the body. But little regard is paid to the burial places, although these Mutes are very much incensed whenever attempts are made to take away any skulls or bones from the grave yards. They also make a long detour in passing the resting place of the dead, and will on no account touch anything once deposited at a burial.

A woman's grave has her clothing, sewing gear and various household utensils placed upon it. One of the most peculiar acts I heard of took place in the month of May, during the whaling season, at Point Hope. A woman died and her body was carried out to the edge of the ice. Three old women cut her heart out, wrapped it in a covering of seal intestines, and threw it into the sea through a hole in the floe. This was done in order to bring good luck to the catch.

Peacemakers Among the Warring Birds.

A resident of Memphis, Mo., erected on his lawn a large bird-house, intended as the summer house of a flock of martins. It was a three-story affair, and three varieties of birds inhabited it—martins, bluebirds and sparrows. The numbers were about equal. The mixture of breeds did not appear to cause discontent for a long time. Each bird nation gathered sticks and straw and other material for nests, and harmony prevailed for weeks.

One day however, this gentleman's family discovered that there was something wrong with the inhabitants of the airy house on the lawn. There was unusual commotion, a squalling, pecking and fluttering which denoted trouble in the hitherto happy family. A close watch brought the further discovery that the martins and bluebirds had joined forces and were making a mighty effort to drive the sparrows off the premises.

The sparrows battled pluckily for their home, but were in the end doomed to defeat and an ignominious flight.

Opposite the lawn, in a neighbor's yard, stood several large oaks. A small colony of bluejays had pre-empted homes here. The sparrows on being forced from their homes and nests took refuge in the oaks. Their advent was followed by bird chatter, and chirp, and squall, participated in by both sparrows and jays. The noise attracted the family, and now two households were watching with interest the actions of the winged tribes.

Shortly the sparrows, seemingly escorted by a number of the jays, returned to the lawn and house. This was followed by a convention of bird music in which the jays took the prominent part. By and by the bedlam of voices ceased, and the jays did the talking or chirping. They soon returned to the oaks, leaving quiet and peace on the lawn. The three bird colonies worked all summer without further jar or disagreement. Did the jays act the part of peacemakers?

The many individuals who persist in reading by lamp or candle power while they lie in bed, and thereby necessitate several times a year the calling out of the fire department, may possibly in the future indulge their literary habit with perfect safety. An Italian claims to have invented a luminous printing ink which will make it possible to read newspapers or books in the dark.

LITTLE WORKERS.

Swiss Lacemakers and the Products of Their Toil.

Every little toddling in Switzerland must earn its living as soon as it can lisp its own name, either in some work or in taking care of one younger than itself. All along the roadside through the valleys are little board shelters, where, on shelves thus protected, wood carvings and Swiss lace are offered for sale, or a little, bright-eyed, slender-limbed chamois, tended by some child, is to be seen for a few centimes, to be added to the store which is to keep these people from starvation during the long winter, for which they must look out with care.

Under one of these sheds to-day I saw two little girls, who had it in charge, and stopped to speak with them. Both were making lace, their little fingers flying so that I could hardly see them, as they handled the bobbins, any more than the spokes of a wheel in full motion, and the smallest of these children was no larger than are most children at 5 years old in our country, though she told me she was 8. When I patted the little head and expressed surprise that such a little thing should be able to make lace so nicely, the older sister told me with loving pride, that Anna had earned her own living by lace working already for two years. They begged me to buy the piece I saw her making, "for there are five of us," they said, "two younger than we are, and we are sehr arme tres pauvre, very poor," they said, trying in three languages, to make me comprehend the situation and induce me to buy. Both could read and write they told me.

"And where is your mother?" I asked.

She was in the field, and their father was a "trager," i. e., one who stays about the hotels and gets any job that comes to hand of carrying people, afraid or unable to go up the mountains on horseback or on mules, up in a chair set upon a litter, borne by two such men, for exactly the same price as is paid for a horse, and the one man who leads him up with the man or woman on his back. Or a "trager" carries up their trunks upon his shoulders while they thus ride up borne by other "tragers." The sisters begged me to buy, assuring me again that they were very poor; they wanted to get some breakfast they said.

"And have you had no breakfast yet?" I asked, for it was now past 12 o'clock.

"Sehr wenig," they said, very little.

The mother could not give them any this morning; she must go to the field. The elder seemed mother-like, most anxious that the little one should make a sale of her lace, though little Anna said: "You see hers is nicer than mine, for she is older, you see, and can make much nicer lace than I can; of course, my lady, it is better that you buy hers than mine."

I thought of Wordsworth's girl, "We Are Seven." The beauty of their kindliness and love for each other in their poverty, if not of face or feature, "made me glad." Both were exquisitely clean,—face and hands and hair. This was also neatly combed. There were no bangs falling over their foreheads, but every hair was drawn back and fastened, as though not a stray hair should blind their eyes or hinder them in their work. We drove back through this valley, and the sun had long been out of sight behind the high western mountains, when we passed their little stall. Both were there still at work, their little fingers flying no less nimbly than in the morning when I first saw them. They recognized me, and bowed and smiled gratefully for the poor, small purchase I had made of them. I dare say it was the only sale they had made during the day. Dear little Swiss lace makers, in the valley of Laterbrunnen! you gave me far more than I did you in the few francs I paid for your lace.

ANIS' METHOD.

Their Love of Cleanliness and Their Modes of Burial.

In spite of the multifarious duties and tasks that are imposed on these tiny burghers, they still find time to clean and adorn their worthy little persons. No spot, no atom of dust or anything else uncleanly will they tolerate on their bodies. They get rid of the dirt with the brushy tufts on their feet or with their tongues. They act, for all the world, like domestic cats when they clean and lick themselves, and they assist one another at the toilet precisely like monkeys. Their sense of cleanliness goes so far that the naturalists often finds, to his unpleasant surprise, the colored marks that he had applied with so much care on his "trial ants" removed by their dirt-hating friends. They keep their dwellings just as cleanly.

But the conveying away their deceased brethren, whose bodies they appear to regard with the greatest antipathy, gives them more trouble than anything else. When some members of an ant community which Mr. Cook kept imprisoned died and could not be removed those remaining seemed affected with the greatest horror. For a day the insects ran about seeking a way out, and ceased only when completely exhausted. The ants belonging to the camponorus species seized the dead and threw them into the water pail, which they converted into a sepulcher. Ordinarily, though, the ants are said to treat their dead with more reverence. They even possess their own graveyards, which lie in the vicinity of their nests. They convey their deceased companions thither, where they lay them down in orderly little heaps or rows.

It is only the corpses of their fellows, however, that they treat in this manner. Dead strangers they throw out like something unclean, or tear the body in pieces. Even between the master and slaves of the same community Miss Trent says she has observed dissimilar mode of burial. While the masters find their last repose in a special grave-yard, side by side, the slaves lie like heaped-up refuse near the nest, despised equally in death as in life.

The ant cemeteries are often thickly populated, for their life is short. The male lives only through one summer; the females live somewhat longer, and the workers die of old age in the eighth or tenth month.

—A little arithmetic shows that a mince pie suitable for the Bartholdi Goddess of Liberty's mouth would have to be thirty feet in diameter.

THE NEVA RIVER.

The Beauty, Purity and Picturesqueness of This Northern Water-Course.

A mere neck of earth separates the Russian capital from the great inland sea of Ladoga, and through more than forty intervening versts of forest land, green and wavy with the trembling aspen, the birch, the alder and the silver pine, the Neva moves majestically down its deep channel, by villages and clearings, past scattered communes and straggling huts, between sounding wood yards and busy factories, till at last, gliding along the famed granite quays of the imperial city, it pours by five broad mouths and narrow outlets innumerable into the Gulf of Finland.

No Russian river has the beauty, the purity, the picturesqueness, which are the attributes of this northern water-course; yet to fully appreciate the nobleness of its aspect in the warm season, one must be familiar with its wintry appearance, and above all witness its vernal emancipation from the fetters of frost by ukase of the "father of warmth," the Slav Apollo, Dazh-Bog himself. For nearly six months a ringing highway for man and beast, the Neva grows unsafe for travel late in the month of April, and has usually resumed its freedom by the beginning of May; yet the opening of the attack on the crystal-line mass procedes the moment of its melting by weeks. A month sometimes elapses before the solar rays have begun to sensibly thin the ice crust, and for a month of seeming defiance of the forces of renaissance droskies pursue their chosen paths over the congealed river, pedestrians continue to traverse it in chair slides or on foot, the heavy wagons of merchant and trader go rumbling over in the same endless procession, and the Samoyeds, those Gypsies of the north, cling with their reindeers to the camping ground of their winter exile on the frozen stream, which is soon to bear them back to their homes in the Arctic circle.

The metamorphosis then follows with a swiftness truly Russian. The last screws and clasps of molecular cohesion are drawn in a single night; the thickest ice-plate then opens to its solar enemy a thousand lines of march. In the morning, with firm, quick steps, you may safely traverse the Neva, still ice-covered; at noon, your return is barred by a clear, swelling stream, whose whim bonds have turned to dancing liquid facets, from which the sun laughs back its light and its triumph. True, the ice is not yet wholly gone, but it peeps the eye henceforth purely as a spectacle—the offering not of a river, but of a lake. This new ice is the product of more northern waters, the snowy blocks and bergs of Ladoga, glittering *debris* of an unequal combat that every spring renews. For some days after the breaking-up along the Neva, in the internal between the beginning of open and that of safe navigation, the river channel is thronged with broken strata, cleft blocks, truncated pillars, shivered columns; with spires and spears and shafts; nay, with all shapeful and shapeless masses, that half undergo and half escape degelation in the annual return of heat to the far north. Slowly the rank and file of this shining host glide past, driving back to shelter a fleet of venturesome ferry-boats, battering the bridge piers with dangerous force and frequency, scraping the quays with a sonorous attrition, and emitting throughout the duration of their passage a strange rustling, crunching sound. By day striking, by night solemn and weird, this scene passes in its turn, and for six months the Neva presents the aspect which I have described in the opening paragraph.

A Persian Prince's Purse.

On the side of the high road to Shiraz, 30 miles before the city is reached, going north, stands a bare pole. This marks the place where the body of Sergt. Collins was found after his murder.

Sergt. Collins was an inspector of the telegraph line, a man of great personal bravery. Accompanied by his wife, two servants, and two muleteers, he started on his inspection duty. Collins was hardly convalescent from a fever attack when he started, and he had no choice in traveling but to lie on a mattress flung on a loaded mule.

At early dawn one day a muleteer suddenly cried: "Sahib, they have blocked the road;" and, looking ahead, the Sergeant saw some men in front who were covering him with their guns. At the same moment these men ordered him to dismount. Now the Sergeant was the best shot in Persia. "Be off!" he shouted, firing his revolver twice. The robbers rushed in, firing as they came; and Collins was hit in two places, death being instantaneous. After beating the lifeless body with their iron-headed sticks, the robbers blindfolded and carried off the wife and two servants, detaining them in a dell till after midnight.

At the persistent instigation of the English minister at Teheran, the Persian authorities arrested the three principal robbers. Another of them committed suicide to avoid capture; another had died from a gunshot wound, apparently inflicted by Collins. But the Persian authorities, though they had got the criminals in jail, seemed very loth to bring them to justice. But at length Mirza Hassan Ali Khan, C. S. I., our agent at Shiraz, succeeded in goading the Prince Governor, H. R. H. Zil-es-Sultan, into trying the prisoners.

The proceedings were very curious. There was no doubt of the guilt of the men, but there was no witnesses of the murder. The sergeant was dead, his wife and his two servants had been frightened out of their wits, and the muleteer declared that he could remember nothing. The Zil-es-Sultan, finding that the English Minister would not remain satisfied, ordered the robbers to be brought before him. The Prince Governor himself embodied the law. Half a dozen courtiers lolled against the wall, their arms respectfully crossed upon their breasts. Seated on a silk mattress in a corner of the room, his back supported by gold embroidered cushions, the young Prince twiddled his moustache, or played with the jewelled hilt of his sabre, or toyed with the buckle of priceless brilliants which formed the central ornament of his plain leather waist belt.

The three men were dressed as villagers usually are, in tall felt caps and long felt coats. When they were hustled into the hall of audience they were still heavily ironed, for these men are often desperate criminals, and would not hesitate for a moment to murder their jailers if they thought they would thereby secure a chance to escape. On entering the royal presence they bow almost to the ground. "Salaam!" they shout in a kind of chorus; your villager or tribesman never speaks, he always shouts. "How do you like prison?" says the Prince, nodding to them with a smile. In reply, the bandits assert their innocence, calling at every sentence upon Heaven and the Prophet. "Are we not harmless tribesmen, we who live in your Royal Highness' Shadow?" May we be your sacrifice!" The Prince still smiles blandly. "Ah, my friends," says he, "I, too, am a Mussulman. We are all Mussulmans here; and—and, in fact—an unbeliever more or less doesn't much matter. You have truly done a good deed. I shall shall not really punish but reward you. That you killed the Feringhi there is, of course, no doubt; and so I must punish you nominally. What I propose to do is to cut off a joint of one finger to each of you. But what is that? Nothing. Your dresses of honor are ready. You will put them on and be instantly liberated. And now my children," says the smiling Prince, "tell me all about it. How did you manage it, eh?"

The astonished prisoners received this speech with a burst of joy. All shouting at once, they hastened to give the Prince full particulars. "The European fired twice from one pistol—may we be your sacrifice!—and then we all fired together, rushing in on him. He was but a European—may your shadow never be less! We trust in the clemency of your Royal Highness! May we be your sacrifice!"

The smile faded from the face of the young Prince Governor, his likeness to the Shah, his father, becoming very apparent as his countenance darkened into ferocity. He had got at the truth; and, without more ado, nodded with appropriate significance to his Chief of Police, the Farrash-bashi, a burly black-bearded man who stood behind the criminals. The prisoners were removed; they were hurried into the public square, in which the palace stands, and there their throats were cut. The bodies lay exposed till sunset, a terror to evil doers.

A red granite tablet in one of the Christian churches at Julfa, subscribed for by the engineer officers and non-commissioned officers in Persia, commemorates the death of Collins.

The Great Guns of England.

England's big guns are made of bars such as that just described, coiled spirally, and welded into a solid mass by the hammer. These red hot furnaces contain a straight bar; at a word the door is slightly raised, and with huge nippers its head is seized by loops made for the purpose. A steam winch draws out the glowing mass, and brings it to a horizontal capstan fixed before the door. A water hose is turned upon the loop, and while it blackens under the chill a stalwart fellow, wielding a heavy sledge, fixes the loop on a nut projecting from the capstan wheel. Then the machine revolves with resistless force, curling the hot metal round and round on its drum neatly and smoothly, and as easily as an experienced girl would wind ribbon. So the coil is formed, whether for the breech piece or the body of the gun, or for its jacket. This again is cooled, and after a while is refined for wielding under the hammer.

You ought to see this Woolwich hammer. It weighs forty tons sheer weight, and when it drops it falls forty feet on to a block that rests on piles, massive masonry and enormous quantities of iron. Between two great shafts this hammer is suspended, a solid block, which, driven from above by steam, and gathering impetus as it falls, strikes with a force of many hundred tons. A veteran workman has charge of this massive hammer. He starts and drops it by a touch of his thumb and finger. I saw an open face watch laid down on the block; then he dropped the hammer, and he stopped it just in time to break the crystal—and nothing more. They call this last operation of the furnace the "great heat," and about every monarch there is in Europe has seen it, just as I did. While I am wondering what they thought about it, the furnace to be emptied is flaring with impatience. Through the interstices of its great door blue, red and purple flames are leaping out. A huge crane swings round a pair of pincers, at that end of, which a dozen Britons cluster. The door rises a little, the white light blinds us, and, although I am at least twenty yards away, the heat burns my face uncomfortably. Water is thrown into the awful gap, and then the men perceive their prey. The huge arms part and firmly close, the door rises to its fullest extent, a clash of the crane gear, a shout from the men and out it comes, easily and softly, a monstrous coil. The crane swings about and places it on end upon the anvil. Then the hammer falls, shaking the solid floor beneath us, crushing the red-hot mass inches down at a blow, welding its coils together so that they can never part. But the inside hollow has been knocked out of shape by this process, so, when the tube has been reduced to its proper length, a solid mandril is deftly slipped betwixt the hammer and the iron. For two or three blows the contracted coil attempts resistance, but it gives way, and the mandril slips to its base, as into butter. Then the great pincers are used again, and it drops the mass on its side, when again it is battered and struck all round. The irregularities caused by this hammering are afterward removed by the plane, as I have already mentioned, and then the gun is made by other machinery.

Cost of Long-Distance Telephoning.

According to *Nature*, the question of telephony against telegraphy has been recently discussed by a well known German electrician, Dr. Wietlisbach. The chief hindrance to the use of the telephone for long distance is, he points out, of a financial, not of a technical nature. A telephone line 2,000 kilometers long (about 1,243 miles), costs considerably over 1,000,000 marks, ($250,000). It is still possible to speak very well this distance, but even supposing the line were in constant use day and night, the receipts must be 5 marks (say shillings) a minute to make it pay. In telephone work, however, the line is in use only a few hours daily; hence a short conversation would cost at least 50 marks (£2 10s.) That is, of course, too dear for ordinary traffic. The telegraph works with almost the same speed, more than ten times more cheaply. Thus the question as to rivalry between telephone and telegraph finds its settlement. The telephone up to about 500 kilometers distance (say 310 miles), will more and more displace the telegraph, and find an extension which the telegraph would never reach. But for greater distances the telegraph must keep the upper hand. Thus telephone and telegraph are really not rivals, but fitted to supplement each other.

THE MEXICAN PALACE.

For Picture of One of the Most Interesting of Buildings.

The Palace is one of the most interesting buildings in Mexico because of its dimensions, the curiosities it contains, its history, and the knowledge we have of the schemes of tyranny and bloodshed devised within its walls. Each of its six patios is entered through ponderous outer doors, that might be relied upon to resist the blows of a catapult, and these courts are surrounded by walls of enormous thickness. The building occupies the exact limits of Montezuma's palace, and contains the official apartments of the President and of the senate, the world-famed Ambassador's Hall, the offices of the Government, the Post-Office, Museum, and a military barracks. President Diaz has leased a residence near the western side of the Plaza, and his private dwelling on Humboldt street, is now the residence of the American Minister, Gen. Henry R. Jackson. The starry banner of the American Legion floats in the soft breeze above the high walls and shady gardens of the private dwelling of the President of the Republic of Mexico.

After a call upon the Premier, Senor Rubio, and an audience with the President, a visit to the Hall of the Ambassadors, and a glance at the well-arranged general post-office, you are close by the entrance of the patio of the Museum. This court is well shaded, and to the left of the entrance you are permitted to enter a small apartment, in which is exhibited the state carriage of the Empire, the gift of Napoleon III. to Carlotta, and said to be handsomer than the imperial coach of Russia.

Opposite the street entrance to this patio is the door of the Aztec hall. Entering this long, narrow chamber, but recently appropriated to its present uses, I found a few workmen erecting pedestals for the gods and the sacrificial and calendar stones (removed hither from the Cathedral walls and the patio enclosure), and the gods themselves lying around in the most undignified postures. The idols exhibited at New Orleans were arriving, and lay scattered about the completed pedstal of the "Divinity of Death," or, as Bandalier insists, the Hutzilopotchli (war god) of Tenochitlan. A few feet distant, and directly in front of this bloody idol, is placed the sacrificial stone on which sixty thousand hearts were cut out to his honor.

The extraordinary carvings on top and sides of this stone of sacrifice attract unlimited attention until the bowl in the centre recalls its bloody uses. Into it the heart's blood of the victim ran, and thence along the trench to the side where it was often drank by the sinister priests, with their "matted black locks towing down their backs;" and then, horror of horrors! to remember that the body of the victim was served by his captor in a banquet to friends, with the most delicate of wines and toothsome of viands.

Ascending a flight of stone steps, close to the fountain that threw the spray of its cooling waters amid tropical plants, the museum proper was reached. The first impression was a disagreeable one; it was made by an intentional display of very bad taste by the commissioners in thrusting the painting of "Maximilian and his General," into an obscure niche, and denying it even a frame. Entering the first room you see relics of Hidalgo by Cosilla, the standard of the conquest, and a noble cast of the face of Juarez. In the second we halted at the long table and the cases containing the hundred and seventy-sixty pieces comprising the "silver plate of Maxamilian." A pleasant-spoken Mexican standing by, said, musically: "Exqueesesete, teelvare plate of day empeer, *Imperio*, senor," in his soft voice; he was an Aztec. Alas! I had read that morning Mendoza's analysis of the so-called silver. He gives it: "Copper, 59.1; zinc, 30.2; nickel, 59.7; iron, 1,0;—100. The silver superficially placed upon it is represented by the decimal 0.05." What a sham to bear the arms of the Empire, and the mark of the factory "Cristofle!"

The remaining rooms contain the glassware of Iturbide, Aztec weapons, musical instruments, mirrors, domestic utensils, shield of Montezuma II, portraits of the Viceroys, picture writings of the Aztecs, their pottery, and feather work, together with the skeletons, minerals, birds, insects, reptiles, fauna and flora of the country. An inspection of the Lorillard collection, denied permission to leave the Republic by Congress, can be obtained on a pass from the Governor of the district only.

The Cricket on the Hearth.

Many believe and all have heard it said that a cricket singing in the house is a barbinger of good fortune.

Some people think if they are heard in the houses it presages death in the family and means are at once taken to drive them out.

In parts of England it is thought killing crickets will bring bad luck, a broken bone, or some such calamity, and if crickets desert a house it foretells death.

Speaking of its voice, it has none. Crickets, katydids, grasshoppers, and cicadas all make songs by rubbing the rough edge of their wings together.

The field cricket can be found and studied anywhere near town. They live in little holes dug down and then back in little galleries. In front of the hole they make a small platform, upon which is thrown the refuse material incident upon housekeeping. All day long, and all night as well, the cricket sits in the entrance of his hole and chirps.

They not only bite each other, but with their long hind legs they kick as viciously as ill-tempered horses.

The males and females live alone, each in its own house, which is valiantly defended against all comers.

Atlantic Cables.

There occurred lately the twentieth anniversary of the opening of the Atlantic cable of 1866. There are now ten cables spanning the Atlantic that are in working order, while where one message was sent onec there are now four, and the tariff, which started twenty years age at £1 a word, is today 5d. At present there are over 80 000 miles of cable at work in the world, and over £37,500,000 have been expended on them, while twenty-one ships are employed in laying, watching and repairing.

NEWS IN BRIEF.

—Cigarette smoking by persons while in the surf is the fashionable child's play at San Diego, Cal.

—Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe, at Hartford, regularly attends the church of which her son is pastor.

—Sir Charles Dilke spends three hours every day in sword practice and pistol shooting at short range.

—Vienna horse cars have two compartments, one for those who smoke and one for those who do not.

—An enthusiastic friend of the laboring man is about to open a five-cent savings bank, at Oshkosh, Wis.

—John Fletcher, an Illinois farmer, has a church on his farm and has hired a preacher for the coming year.

—At a recent wedding in New York City the bridesmaid was herself engaged to marry the bridegroom a year ago.

—Lace is said to be driving out frillings in England, and the Honiton factories at Exeter are overrun with orders.

—A youth committed suicide by jumping from the spire of the St. Augustine Court Church, a height of 115 feet.

—Connecticut is said to be the only state east of Nebraska, where an attempt at suicide is not a legal misdemeanor.

—A Colorado jury found that the death of a gambler, who had been killed in a shooting affray, resulted from "lead poisoning."

—There are in this country 300,000 Indians who are no more civilized than they were 250 years ago, except that they know the use of rifles and whiskey.

—By announcing himself as a preacher and acceptably filling the pulpit of a church at LaPlatte, a sacrilegious Nebraska college boy won a bet of the cigars.

—A Philadelphia soap manufacturer declares that he advertises only in newspapers for the reason "that a man who doesn't read the newspapers has no use for soap."

—Miss Lalia Jordan, of Washington, Ga., has a treasure that she prizes very highly. It is a little shoe worn by the wife of President Cleveland when she was a baby.

—The use of the Suez canal in moving the tea crop from China to America is rapidly being abandoned for the swifter means afforded by transcontinental railways.

—Louis, a former slave of Mrs. Rosser, of Texas, says that Mrs. Parsons, wife of the anarchist, is his sister and that she was freed by President Lincoln's proclamation.

—The cash value of a 6-year old boy has been determined by a Bridgeport, Pa., jury, who awarded the lad's father $250 for damages sustained by the drowning of his son and heir.

—Lord Wolseley is nearing the end of his exhaustive life of the Duke of Marlborough. He has been working on it for many years during the interval of peace in his warlike career.

—Policeman Patrick Kearney, who has the distinction of arresting Guiteau when he shot President Garfield, has been pensioned out of the police fund of Washington at $50 per month.

—Walter Hall of Boston, now owns Daniel Webster's Marshfield estate. It contains now some 450 acres and supports 50 cows, 5 horses, 2 yoke of oxen and several head of young stock.

—The obsidian cliff of Yellowstone park is an elevation half a mile long by from 150 to 200 feet high, the material of which is said to be as good glass as any that has been artificially manufactured.

—A Prohibition Bible is being sold in Atlanta, Ga. It incloses a bottle of whiskey. By touching a spring at one end of the book, the other end opens, and the neck of the bottle bobs up serenely.

—A young man, while hunting in North Park, Col., attempted to set a bear trap and both his hands were caught and held fast. After a week of indescribable agony he thought to release himself by gnawing through his wrists. He bled to death after he had gnawed off one hand.

—Mrs. Fleming, of Wood county, Ohio, lighted an extra candle the other night when the preacher and his wife called, and after they had gone away, her husband, Josiah, boxed her ears for the display of extravagance. Although they have been married forty-two years she has sued for a divorce.

—There is a very mean man in Portland, Ore. He ke