

IN THE VALLEY OF SILENCE.

Far and dim lies the Valley of Silence,
Deep in the borders of Shadowland,
Warbler mountains keep grim surveillance,
And the Dusk and the Dawning go hand
in hand.
Stealing waters with never a bubble,
Winds of roses with never a sigh;
Not a rending roar in the cloudy stubble
When the lightning reaps in a stormy sky.
Never a stir in the grasses swaying,
Never a drone when the bee flies through,
Not a fairy note from the wood, where,
straying,
The soul of the rose meets the soul of the
dew.
Never a song as the birds wing over
The silver rashes where the lilies blow
Or spangled turf where the dauntless clover
Drifts high in the sunshine her scented
snow.
In tall pale poppies the love that spake not
Noels all year long through a dreamful
drowse.
From Sleep and from Death their eyes shall
wake not
Who crown with such blossom their gla-
mourous brows,
Dim and far lies the Valley of Silence,
Deep in the borders of Shadowland,
Warbler mountains keep stern surveillance,
And the Dusk and the Dawning go hand
in hand.
—Martha M. Williams, in Harper's Bazar.

The Two Silver Bullets.

BY W. BERT FOSTER.



HE long, narrow room, the only entrance to which was by a tortuous passage behind old Leopold's tobacco shop, was but dimly lighted by the flaring blaze of the filthy candles set into a three pronged candlestick in the middle of the table. But although the light only vaguely outlined the figures of fourteen men about the board, it shone full upon our faces, and showed each his neighbor's countenance in the pallid yellow glow.
At the head of the table sat Pulaski, his burly form making the rickety chair in which he sat creak and groan. His stature seemed almost gigantic beside that of the others, for we were all of sunny France but he. At the other end of the table sat I, the least of them in stature—petit garcon, they called me once—but I was tough and wiry—ah, yes, for have I not lived to be an old, old man?
How often had we met in that dingy apartment ere Pulaski came, and, with bated breath yet flashing eyes, talked of the unredressed wrongs of the poor, and the arrogance and pride of the rich and powerful! But Pulaski was a man of action. He was not content to talk of the people's sufferings, but proposed to do something—to perform some great work for the emancipation of the trampled down, and the raising of the red flag of liberty.
Pulaski was of that land where they are ever fighting, and dying, and being beaten and exiled, for the sake of liberty, and he threw himself, body and soul, into our cause. He organized us and taught us the fierce principles of his own bloody religion, and fired our hearts with something of his hatred of the rich and noble. Then he said we must do more than talk—we must strike!
And now the fatal hour had come. We had chosen our sacrifice. He was hated of the people and must die. He had done much against the cause of liberty, and we all echoed Pulaski's fierce declaration that he must suffer for his crimes. Besides, he was not rich, and arrogant, and powerful in the State?
Now we were to draw lots to see who should perform the work, and to us this meant much. Whoever drew the fatal lot should compass the task to which we had agreed, and in that same hour he should also die. We trusted each other, but man is weak; and long brooding on death, or perhaps the torture, might, if he lived to be tried, wring from the most faithful the names of his companions in the conspiracy. This was perfectly understood.
"We are all here," said Pulaski, raising his massive head, and his deep voice filling the room. "He must die. Are we all agreed?"
A hoarse "Aye!" rose from the group about the table.
"And we are firm upon that matter of the future course of the messenger who bears death to him?"
Another murmur of sullen acquiescence followed.
Pulaski glanced slowly about the board, his fierce gaze resting upon each face in turn—longer, I thought, on mine than on the others.
"There are fourteen of us," he said.
From the drawer at his end of the table he produced a handful of small, white beans, thirteen of which he counted upon the table in our sight. Then from another compartment in the same drawer he brought forth one black one, and placed it with the white.
"There are fourteen," he said again.
A hat served in want of a better receptacle, and into it the fourteen beans were dropped. Pulaski shook them together, and passed the hat to the man at his right hand. It was too dark in the room to see the color of the beans in the hat, had one wished; but the first man looked straight ahead as he plucked his hand within and brought it slowly forth again, closed tightly over the bean he had selected. His hand remained closed as he passed the hat to his neighbor, and thus it went down the table.
A strange, odd feeling of terror came over me as I watched the progress of

the hat along the board. I am not a coward; but something seemed to be stifling me, and I could scarcely refrain from crying out. I felt that the black bean would fall to me; yet I know not why. I looked about upon the faces of my companions; but all were so grave and stern that I was ashamed of my fear. Was I, Francois Ducret, to be a child in the supreme hour of trial?
Then the hat was passed to me.
A mist rose before my eyes, and the dingy, stuffy room seemed to reel in my vision; yet through it all I saw Pulaski's stern, set face, his thin lips drawn back over his white teeth, and his eyes fairly blazing. I groped for the hat like a blind person, and thrust my hand within. Perhaps I occupied no more time in drawing my lot than had the others; but it seemed an eternity to me. Ah, yes; time is not rightly measured by hours and minutes, but by events. It takes ages to do some things, though the hour glass may tell you but a few minutes have passed.
Before my fingers clutched the little bean I had been terrified by a certain knowledge that I should draw the fatal lot. When it was firmly in my clasp, however, and I had passed the hat along the board, that feeling left me. I felt relieved—almost happy; the terrible ordeal was over, and I was impressed now so strongly by a feeling of exultant relief—so great a reaction from my previous morbid fear—that I was willing to swear that I had been lucky, and that the fatal lot had fallen, or would fall, to some other. I should not have to die! Ah, I was young, and life was sweet to me then.
I sat back in my chair, and my eyes followed the course of the hat about the table, while there was almost a smile upon my lips. My hand remained tightly closed over the bean, however, and the others did likewise. I could feel the small, hard particle pressing against my palm, yet I had no feeling of fear as to its color.
Then the hat came back to Pulaski, and almost feverishly he seized it and clutched the remaining bean, turning the hat upside down upon the table, and rapping it smartly to show that it was empty. The noise startled us all into more upright positions; still, for several seconds, none sought to view what he held in his hand. Then Pulaski opened his palm outward that we might see, and displayed—a white bean.
I looked from one to another of my comrades as their hands slowly opened, that strange feeling of safety still in my heart, and the half smile upon my lips. Who had drawn the fatal lot? Who among my companions—men whom I had known in the university, men whom I had known from childhood—who among them all was doomed to perform the bloody work, and in the same hour end his own existence?
Suddenly, with the amazement that a peal of thunder from a clear sky might cause one, I saw that the eyes of them all were bent on me! I glanced swiftly about the table; each lid lay open, and in the palms thus displayed were the thirteen white beans! It took a minute, perhaps, for the full significance of this fact to dawn upon me.
Then I opened my own hand.
"The lot has been drawn."
Pulaski's deep voice reached my ear faintly, as though from a great distance. I still sat at the dirty table; the candles still sputtered in their sockets; the pale, set faces of my comrades were all about me. But I had lived over my whole life again, and its end was now at hand.
"According to our agreement," our leader said, more distinctly than before, "the messenger of death is to take this weapon"—he drew a pistol from the table drawer and laid it before him—"and with it do his work. It is loaded with two silver bullets; one is for his heart, the other for the messenger himself. Is it understood?"
I bowed mechanically and received the pistol.
"One barrel for him, the other for you," repeated Pulaski, "for it is agreed that he shall die."
"Aye, he must die," chorused the others; but my parched lips gave forth no sound.
Then, one by one, my friends came and embraced me and went out; but Pulaski passed me without a word. Only his fierce glance seemed to burn into my very soul.
"One barrel for him, the other for me!" I muttered. Staggering to my feet, I hid the pistol in my bosom and walked through the passage into the tobaccoist's shop.
Old Leopold was behind the little counter, as usual, but I passed him without a word.
"Wilt thou not have one to-day, Francois?" he asked, pushing the box toward me.
He was an old man, and bear-eyed; but he was poor, and the purchases of the little company who met so frequently in that back room meant much to him. I threw him a franc, and, selecting a cheroot mechanically, went out without my change. On the walk I began to tear off mouthfuls of the strong tobacco and eat it as a hungry man would bread. Then my brain became clearer, and I was able to think, and plan, and remember, once more.
It was dark when I made my way into his garden. It was a beautiful garden, but gardens are only for the rich. A great wall was built all about it, that the poor might not even see its beauty. All things are denied the poor but labor; that they have in plenty.
He was in the habit of walking in his garden early in the morning. We all knew that; everybody knew it, in fact, so I concealed myself beside the

path and waited. The pistol was in my bosom—my hand upon it. I could not fail to hit the mark, for he would pass within a yard of me.
"One barrel for him, the other for me!" I kept repeating, and thus the night wore away and the gray dawn broke at last.
First a liveried servant—as haughty as his master—marched down the walk and unbarred the massive gate. Then other tokens of life appeared about the villa. A maid was singing about her work; she had a clear, sweet voice. Somehow it sounded like my mother's, though in what manner I could not tell. Perhaps she sang the same ditty that I had heard her sing to my little sister. These recollections brought the tears to my eyes, but I gripped the pistol all the more firmly.
At last I saw him come from the hall and pass down the marble steps into the garden. He was a handsome, imposing old man, and hearty looking, as though he had yet many years of life before him. I alone knew that he had but a few moments. I would let him enjoy the sweet morning air for a little while, and then—
"One barrel for him; the other for you!"
I could almost have sworn that it was Pulaski's voice in my ear, yet a startled glance around assured me that I was alone in the shrubbery. And he was coming down the path toward me. On his breast were several decorations, for he was never seen abroad—not even in his garden—without being fully dressed. How the baubles glittered in the sunlight! In a few moments his life blood would blot out their brightness, for he was coming nearer, and the pistol was in my hand now.
My finger trembled on the trigger; yet I would wait a moment. He would be nearer; and, besides, the air was sweet, and how beautifully the sunlight sparkled through the spray of the fountain!
Suddenly there was an eager, childish shout from the villa, and a little figure dashed out over the portal and down the path with a cry of "Grander!" Such a lovely, fairy-like creature as she was! She was like my little sister, and he swung her up into his arms and kissed her just as I had often kissed Joan ere she died.
He went to the garden seat near by and drew her to his knee. How lovingly she threw her arms about his neck and patted his cheek with her tiny hands! Ah, how she would feel when they found him lying dead in the garden! One might easily see that her loving little heart was wholly given over to him. "Would be a pity to break that little heart, yet even then the pistol was turned full upon him.
And while she prattled on, and he listened, and I watched the two, a sudden tumult arose outside the garden. There were hoarse cries, and the trampling of many feet, and into the garden came a man, and into the porter had all covered with foam and sweat, and with the froth drizzling from his savage jaws, dashed a huge, shaggy brute, and rushed up the path toward those two on the seat.
"Mon Dieu!" he cried, and put her quickly behind him, facing the maddened beast empty handed as he was.
"For her sake!" I muttered, and rising from the covert I fired the first barrel of the pistol. The brute sprang high into the air, and then fell back to the dust, dead.
While the people crowded in, I escaped. There was still a little money in my purse, and I left Paris and hastened to Havre, there to take passage for America. I crept about the dark streets at night until I could find an opportunity to embark from my native land, and there Pulaski found me.
I knew he would come; I had seen it in his cruel eyes when he left me that day in the room behind the tobaccoist's. I had not been a traitor, but the child had shielded him with her innocence.
Pulaski sprang upon me in a lonely place—perhaps he had been dogging me for days; I know not.
"I have found you," he said, in his deep, rumbling voice. "Traitor! You were the chosen messenger of death; you drew the lot; why did you not keep your oath?"
I could say naught.
"Self accused, you die by my hand!" he hissed, and I saw the flash of the steel above my head; but I had the pistol still.
"One barrel for him," I shouted, "this one for you!"
I fired and as I ran from the spot I looked back and saw his huge body sway forward, and fall, a dead thing, upon the pavement.
Then I came to America. I am an old man now; but can I ever forget?—*Munsey's Magazine.*

LADIES OF THE CABINET.



CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

A DEPARTMENT FOR LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

Something that Will Interest the Juvenile Members of Every Household—Quaint Actions and Bright Sayings of Many Cute and Cunning Children.

Wishing—
"I'll wish to be a princess and
To have a horse to ride,



And have some footmen, brave and tall,
To walk close by my side.
To be a princess, really, true,
With long, long golden hair,
With forty maids, all dressed in white,
To stand around my chair.
And have a park a mile around,
With trees and paths and flowers,
And birds' nests full of eggs and things,
And castles and some towers.
And I will live forever there
Until a prince will come
With long black hair, and look quite fierce,
And take me to his home.
A Good Reason.
"Why did you tumble down, my boy?" the kindly teacher cried.



Old Bronze.
"It's the strangest thing," said Jessie, with wide-open eyes.
"And my flowers will never grow," said Ruth, shaking her head ruefully.

It was strange. Out in a corner of the garden was a rockery. On the rockery was an iron basket made to hold flowers. Ruth had planted in the middle of it a white lily bulb. All around the edges she had put morning glory seeds. She wanted the vines to droop over the sides of the basket and run down the stones.
Every day the children visited it and found that something was doing mischief. It was very plain that the seeds and bulb were trying to do their duty, for many and many a tiny shoot came peeping above ground. But the earth about them was scratched and the tender green stalks broke down and withered.
And it kept on day after day.
"It must be rats," said Jack.
"But nothing else in the garden was ever touched."
"Couldn't be frost, could it?" asked little Nan.

CHILDREN'S COLUMN.

A DEPARTMENT FOR LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS.

They all laughed, for the geranium and pansies were smiling up in the sunshine. One day the children came home early from school. Out into the garden they ran, and then there was a shout:
"If it isn't old Bronze!"
Old Bronze was the largest cat they had. Jack had named him long ago, not because he was bronze colored, but because Jack knew that bronze was some kind of a color, and thought it sounded well.
There lay old Bronze on the basket. It was just the time when the afternoon sun shone on it. He probably found the warm earth a very comfortable bed.
They all laughed, and Jack said:
"I'll fix him!"
He got the watering hose and aimed at old Bronze, while Harry ran to turn on the water.
"Oh, don't," cried Ruth. "Poor old fellow! He did not know any better."
"But he must be taught a lesson," said Jack, very firmly. "Now scoot!"
The cold water came with a dash, and old Bronze "scooted." With one long, dreadful m-aw-w-w-w! he sprang off the basket, flew over the flower-beds, and did not stop until he was in the top of the tallest tree.
"Poor old Bronze!" The little girls petted and coaxed and fondled him when he came down. He had learned his lesson well, for he never so much as looked at the basket again. And the lily grew, and was soon looking around her like a queen. The morning glories crept down and wandered

softly over the stones until, before summer was gone, the rockery looked like a bank of flowers.—*Chicago Ledger.*



"Now scoot!"



KANGAROO

sends them spinning down into the box, where they skirmish around until they fall into a cavity. All the cavities are provided with numbers, and the highest total number covered by the balls of a player wins the game.
Bamboo Culture in Florida.
"Successful experiments have been made in raising bamboo in Florida," said Abe Walthen, at the Grand. "There are several patches near Fort Myers, and the plants are all growing rapidly, sometimes as much as a foot in a single night. The importance of this new industry cannot be overestimated. For the building of light summer houses, or for certain kinds of furniture, bamboo cannot be surpassed. Road vehicles can be made out of it and many other things too numerous to mention. Clothing can be made from its fiber, as can paper, and a portion of it is most excellent as food. It is the only plant known that furnishes shelter, clothing and sustenance to mankind, and its introduction here will be of great public benefit."—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

OUR BUDGET OF FUN.

HUMOROUS SAYINGS AND DOINGS HERE AND THERE.

Jokes and Jokelets that Are Supposed to Have Been Recently Born—Sayings and Doings that Are Odd, Curious, and Laughable—The Week's Humor.
Let Us All Laugh.
"DON'T forget, then Ann, that your master is a colonel." "Oh, I adore soldiers, ma'am."—*Tid-Bits.*
YOUTH (defiantly)—Mine is no idle boast. Maid—It isn't like anything else of yours, then.—*Detroit Free Press.*
"Did you ever go to Bins, the tailor?" "Yes. Got two suits from him. One dress suit. One law suit. Very expensive man."
CLERK—"Are you going to discharge me, then?" Druggist—"Yes; I think we can dispense without you."—*Harvard Lampoon.*
Wrow, o referred to a conversation he had had with two female eaf dubs as "a little exercise with the dumb belles."—*Philadelphia Record.*
WIFE—"Don't you believe the gas meter is defective in some way?" Husband—"It may be, but I notice that it is able to fill the bill every month."
SHE—"You are awfully young to be called colonel." He—"Well, I have been in eighteen engagements and the girl and I fought in every one."—*New York News.*
EASTERLY—"I suppose the cyclones you have out here often lift everything right off of a farm." Westerly—"Er—yes; everything except the mortgage."—*Buffalo Courier.*
SMITH-JONES—"How do you manage to keep up your mental energy so well?" Smith-Brown—"My wife gives me a piece of her mind every morning before I start to work."—*Harlem Life.*
TOMMY—"Paw, I heard a man say that Mr. Batts was a self-made man. What is a self-made man?" Mr. Tinkle—"A man who knows how to buy a dollar's worth of work for 50 cents."
LOVE in a cottage is becoming a board of health affair. Although bread has thus far been exempt, diphtheria bacilli have been found in the cheese and kisses.—*Philadelphia Ledger.*
STILLINGFLEET—"What would you do with a tailor who never has your trousers done at the time he has contracted to deliver them?" Wienbiddle—"Sue him for breeches of promise."
THE sarcastic girl always says lots of brilliant things in the course of her career, but she doesn't usually get married as young as the majority of her high school classmates do.—*Somerville Journal.*
MRS. SKELETON BANG—"What new dishes have you had since you have your new cook?" Mrs. Tinkle—"A whole new dinner set and several extra pieces besides, and she's only been here a week."
NURSE—"Luke at the awkward little rascal! Tryin' to put his tath-in' ring in his eye." Fond Mother—"It is not awkwardness at all, Mary Jane; it is instinct. He takes it for a monocle."—*Indianapolis Journal.*
"KRAUSE will have it that he made a speech of two hours' duration at the meeting, but I see it only takes up the space of half a column in the papers." "Ah; but you know, Krause stammers."—*Humoristischer Blaetter.*
STUDIOUS BOY—"What is the meaning of 'market value' and 'intrinsic value'?" Father—"The 'market value' is the price you pay for a thing; 'intrinsic value' is what you get when you sell it to a second-dealer."—*Tid-Bits.*
AMY—"I remember your friend Clare married Mr. Nicotine so as to reform him. He was such an intemperate smoker. How did she succeed?" Joe—"Perfectly. He gave up tobacco entirely—and took to drink."—*Arkansas Traveler.*
"HOT!" he exclaimed. "Well, I should say so. And the least exertion wears me all out." And while his wife toted a crying baby around he wandered downtown and walked eight miles and forty two laps around a billiard table.—*Minneapolis Journal.*
WHEN a young man returns from a picnic and says he had a good time, after rowing boats and pulling lilies for summer girls, and eating lunch in a pasture with the bugs, it is just as much a lie as though he said he caught three hundred fish or killed a bear.—*Acheson Globe.*
GLASSSEATER—Ad' wot's de trouble now? Manager—De two-headed man's more bodder den he's wort'. I came around to-night wid de week's salary, an' de right head said it was his turn ter get de swag; den up pops de left an' calls de right head a liar; an' dere scrappin' yet!—*Syracuse Post.*
To Keep Butter from Getting Strong.
A Bristol farmer who, having been a tiller of the soil thirty-two years, might be expected to know a thing or two by this time, remains as unacquainted in the ways of fine domestic agriculture as if he lived beyond the bounds of civilization, and never read the newspapers. He does not get any Philadelphia newspaper, but chance brought a copy of a New York journal under his eye recently, and he eagerly noted the tempting offer of an advertiser to disclose upon receipt of \$10 the secret of "How to keep butter from getting strong." Visions of largely increased profits from his dairy prompted him to mail the money, for which he has received the advice: "Eat it."—*Philadelphia Record.*