

solution of which I discovered that a diamond of the size I just mentioned was necessary. You were never alluded to during the evening, nor, so far as I was concerned, even thought of. What can be the meaning of this outburst? If you happen to have a set of valuable diamonds in your possession, you need fear nothing from me. The diamond which I require you could not possess; or if you did possess it, you would not be living here."

Something in my tone must have completely reassured him; for his expression immediately changed to a sort of constrained merriment, combined, however, with a certain suspicious attention to my movements. He laughed, and said that I must bear with him; that he was at certain moments subject to a species of vertigo, which betrayed itself in incoherent speeches, and that the attacks passed off as rapidly as they came. He put his weapon aside while making this explanation, and endeavored, with some success, to assume a more cheerful air.

All this did not impose on me in the least. I was too much accustomed to analytical labors to be fluffed by so flimsy a veil. I determined to probe the mystery to the bottom.

"Simon," I said, gaily, "let us forget all this over a bottle of Burgundy. I have a case of Lausseau's Clos Vougeot downstairs, fragrant with the odors and ruddy with the sunlight of Cote d'Or. Let us have a couple of bottles. What say you?"

"With all my heart," answered Simon, smilingly.

I produced the wine, and we seated ourselves to drink. It was of a famous vintage, that of 1848, a year when war and wine thrived together—and it was pure, but powerful juice seemed to impart renewed vitality to the system. By the time we had half finished the second bottle, Simon's head, which I knew was a weak one, had begun to yield, while I remained calm as ever, only that every draught seemed to send a flush of vigor through my limbs. Simon's utterance became more and more indistinct. He began singing French chansons of a not very moral tendency. I rose suddenly from the table just at the conclusion of one of those incoherent verses, and, fixing my eyes on him with a quiet smile, said:

"Simon, I have deceived you. I learned your secret this evening. You may as well be frank with me. Mrs. Vulpes or rather one of her spirits, told me all." He started with horror. His intoxication seemed for the moment to fade away, and he made a movement toward the weapon that he had a short time before laid down. I stopped him with my hand.

"Monster!" he cried passionately. "I am ruined! What shall I do? You shall never have it! I swear by my mother!" "I don't want it," I said; "rest secure, but be frank with me. Tell me all about it."

The drunkenness began to return. He protested with maudlin earnestness that I was entirely mistaken—that I was intoxicated; then asked me to swear eternal secrecy, and promised to disclose the mystery to me. I pledged myself, of course, to all. With an uneasy look in his eyes, and hands unsteady with drink and nervousness, he drew a small case from his breast and opened it. Heavens! How the mild lamplight was shivered into a thousand prismatic arrows, as it fell upon a vast rose-diamond that glittered in the case! I was no judge of diamonds, but I saw at a glance that this was a gem of rare size and purity. I looked at Simon with wonder, and—must I confess it?—with envy. How could he have obtained this treasure? In reply to my questions, I could just gather from his drunken statements (of which, I fancy, half the incoherence was affected) that he had been superintending a gang of slaves engaged in diamond-washing in Brazil; that he had seen one of them secrete a diamond, but, instead of informing his employers, had quietly watched the negro until he saw him bury his treasure; that he had dug it up, and fled with it, but that as yet he was afraid to attempt to dispose of it publicly, so valuable a gem being almost certain to attract too much attention to its owner's antecedents, and he had not been able to discover any of those obscure channels by which such matters are conveyed away safely. He added, that, in accordance with Oriental practice, he had named his diamond by the fanciful title of "The Eye of Morning."

While Simon was relating this to me, I regarded the great diamond attentively. Never had I beheld anything so beautiful. All the glories of light, ever imagined or described, seemed to pulsate in its crystalline chambers. Its weight, as I learned from Simon, was exactly one hundred and forty karats. Here was an amazing coincidence. The hand of Destiny seemed in it. On the very evening when the spirit of Lenuvnehoek communicates to me the great secret of the microscope, the priceless means which he directs me to employ start up within my easy reach! I determined, with the most perfect deliberation, to possess myself of Simon's diamond.

I sat opposite him while he nodded over his glass, and calmly revolved the whole affair. I did not for an instant contemplate so foolish an act as a common theft, which would, of course, be

discovered, or at least necessitate flight and concealment, all of which must interfere with my scientific plans. There was but one step to be taken,—to kill Simon. After all, what was the life of a little peddling Jew, in comparison with the interests of science? Human beings are taken every day from the condemned prisons to be experimented on by surgeons. This man, Simon, was by his own confession, a criminal, a robber, and I believed on my soul a murderer. He deserved death quite as much as any felon condemned by the laws. Why should not I, like government, contrive that his punishment should contribute to the progress of human knowledge?

The means for accomplishing everything I desired lay within my reach. There stood upon the mantelpiece a bottle half full of French laudanum. Simon was so occupied with his diamond, which I had just restored to him, that it was an affair of no difficulty to drug his glass. In a quarter of an hour he was in a profound sleep.

I now opened his waistcoat, took the diamond from the inner pocket in which he had placed it, and removed him to the bed, on which I laid him so that his feet hung down over the edge. I had possessed myself of the Malay creese, which I held in my right hand, while with the other I discovered, as accurately as I could by pulsation, the exact locality of the heart. It was essential that all the aspects of his death should lead to the surmise of self-murder. I calculated the exact angle at which it was probable that the weapon, if leveled by Simon's own hand, would enter his breast; then with one powerful blow I thrust it up to the hilt in the very spot which I desired to penetrate. A convulsive thrill ran through Simon's limbs. I heard a smothered sound issue from his throat, precisely like the bursting of a large air bubble, sent up by a diver, when it reaches the surface of the water; he turned half round on his side, and, as if to assist my plans more effectually, his right hand, moved by some mere spasmodic impulse, clasped the handle of the creese, which it remained holding with extraordinary muscular tenacity. Beyond this there was no apparent struggle. The laudanum, I presume, paralyzed the usual nervous action. He must have died instantaneously.

There was yet something to be done. To make it certain that all suspicion of the act should be diverted from any inhabitant of the house to Simon himself, it was necessary that the door should be found in the morning locked on the inside. How to do this, and afterward escape myself? Not by the window; that was a physical impossibility. Besides, it was determined that the windows also should be found bolted. The solution was simple enough. I descended softly to my own room for a peculiar instrument which I had used for holding small slippery substances, such as minute spheres of glass, etc. This instrument was nothing more than a long, slender hand-vice, with a very powerful grip, and a considerable leverage, which last was accidentally owing to the shape of the handle. Nothing was simpler than, when the key was in the lock, to seize the end of its stem in this vise, through the keyhole, from the outside, and so lock the door. Previously, however, to doing this, I burned a number of papers on Simon's hearth. Suicides almost always burn papers before they destroy themselves. I also emptied some more laudanum into Simon's glass,—having first removed from it all traces of wine,—cleaned the other wineglass, and brought the bottles away with me. If traces of two persons drinking had been found in the room, the question naturally would have arisen, Who was the second? Besides, the wine bottles might have been identified as belonging to me. The laudanum I poured out to account for its presence in his stomach, in case of a post mortem examination. The theory naturally would be, that he first intended to poison himself, but, after swallowing a little of the drug, was either disgusted with its motives, and chose the dagger. These arrangements made, I walked out, leaving the gas burning, locked the door with my vise, and went to bed.

Simon's death was not discovered until nearly three in the afternoon. The servant, astonished at seeing the gas burning,—the light streaming on the dark landing from under the door,—peeped through the keyhole and saw Simon on the bed. She gave the alarm. The door was burst open, and the neighborhood was in a fever of excitement.

Everyone in the house was arrested, myself included. There was an inquest; but no clue to his death, beyond that of suicide, could be obtained. Curiously enough, he had made several speeches to his friends, the preceding week, that seemed to point to self-destruction. One gentleman swore that Simon had said in his presence that "he was tired of life." His landlord affirmed that Simon, when paying him his last month's rent, remarked that "he would not pay him rent much longer." All the other evidence corresponded,—the door locked inside, the position of the corpse, the burned papers. As I anticipated, no one knew of the possession of the diamond by Simon, so that no motive was suggested for his murder. The jury, after a prolonged examination, brought in the usual verdict, and the neighborhood once more settled down into its accustomed quiet.

(To be continued.)

Rip-Rap.

One of Dr. Talmage's Earliest, but Best Essays.

A man, like a book, must have an index. He is divided into chapters, sections, pages, preface, and appendix; in size, quarto, octavo, or duodecimo, and bound in cloth, morocco antique, or half calf. The dress, the gait, the behavior are an index to the contents of this strange book, and give you the number of the page.

But I think we may also estimate character by the way one knocks at the door of a house, or rings the bell. We have friends whose coming is characteristically indicated by the sound at the door. They think to surprise us, but their first touch at the door reveals the secret, and we rush out in the hall, crying: "I knew it was you!" The greeting we receive at many a household is: "I knew the ring!"

We look with veneration at the old door-knocker, which, black with the stain of elements, and telling a story of many generations, hangs at the entrance of the homestead. It has none of the frivolous jingle of a modern door-bell. It never jokes, but speaks in tones monosyllabic earnest, solemn, and always to the point. In olden times, the houses were wide apart, and people so busy it was not more than once or twice a week that the old iron clapper sounded at all, and then it would go off with such sudden bang that the whole family jumped, and wondered who was coming there.

The long promised visit from a neighbor was to take place that night. The hickory nuts were cracked, the cider was already in the pitcher, the apples were wiped, and the doughnuts piled up in the closet. The children sat at the fire waiting for the arrival of the guests. It seemed as if the visitors would never come; but at last, rousing up all the echoes of hall, and cellar, and garret, the long silent knocker went Rip-Rap! and there was a shaking off of the snow and running up stairs with hats, and pulling up of chairs at the hearth, and snuffing of candles, and hauling out of the knitting work, and loud clatter and guffaw of voices, some of which have for a good while been still. At the first clap of the knocker, silence fell dead. There is a very festive of memories hanging on the old door. The sailor-boy far at sea wonders if it looks just as it used to when he played on the sill, and imagines himself standing with his hand on the knocker, and in his dream is startled to hear it go off, waking up to find it is only an ice-glazed rope in the rigging, going "Rip-rip! Rip-rip!"

The hearty, enthusiastic man always gives a characteristic ring. When he puts his hand on the knob, it seems as if the bell would go crazy. It flies up and down the house with a racket, and after it seems to be about through, starts up again, as if it meant to apologize for stopping. The nurse runs down from the bedroom, and the cook comes up from the kitchen, and the children bend over the banisters, and the father, who was taking an afternoon nap, bounds to the floor, shouting: "What on earth is the matter?" And you look at the clapper of the bell, and find it swinging yet, as if it were getting ready for another volley.

When our inanimate friend comes to see us, he makes no disturbance. His liver has for several years been on a strike, and his blood acts as if it would have stopped circulation entirely, but for his respect for William Harvey. In his ordinary walk, each step is so undecided that you know not whether he is going on, or is about to stop and spend the evening. As he pulls your bell, you hear the tongue creak in the socket, but no decided ring. You go out in the hall to see if the bell is in motion. You wait for a more decided demonstration, and in about five minutes there is just one little, delicate tap that lets you know the gentleman at the door is still breathing. The door-bell imposes on such men, and hangs idly about, gossiping with bedroom and parlor bells, and deservs to have a good shaking.

Beggars have a characteristic knock. This man with a printed certificate that he was blown up with Vesuvius, and drowned in the Mississippi, and afterward killed on the New Jersey Central, and considerably injured in other respects, comes against your basement door with an emphasis indescribable. He feels that you have what belongs to him. His knuckles are hard with much practice. When he strikes your door, some night, about ten o'clock, you hear something at the basement. It is a cold night, and you think it is only the wind rattling the shutters; but after a while you hear it again—a faint tap, as though it were not made with the knuckle, but the nail of the little finger. You open the door, and before a word is returned, you read in her face: "No fire! No bread for the children! No coverlets to keep them warm! No hope!" She has been at a dozen doors before, but had knocked so softly there was no response. She did not dare to touch the bell lest it might with garrulous tongue tell all her woe; is any one watching that woman in the thin shawl? When she

struck the nail of her little finger against the cold basement door, was the stroke drowned by the night wind? No! It sounded farther than the heavy bang of the sturdy beggar—louder than the clang of forge, or pounding of gauntleted fist of warrior at castle-gate. Against the very door of heaven it struck, and sounded through the long, deep corridors of Infinite pity: "Rip-rip! Rip-rip!"

Children will wake up early in the morning. Perhaps you have been disturbed in the night, and gone wandering around the room in your somnolent state, as much confused as ourselves on one occasion, when at midnight, we heard a croupy cough in the nursery, and gave the ipecac to the wrong baby. Just as you begin your last morning nap, you hear a stir in the adjoining room. The trundled bed is evidently discharging a lot of bare feet on the floor. You hear suppressed laughter at the door, slipping out into an occasional shout as one of them applies the force of a tickle to the bottom of the other's feet. You are provoked to be interrupted at such unseasonable hours, and proclaim children a nuisance. You are glad that the door is locked. But they rattle the knob. They push slips of paper under the door, and getting more and more bold, they knock. Ten fingers, tipped with the rosy tints of the morn, are running races up and down the panel. Your indignation begins to cool, and your determination not to admit is giving way. The noise of fingers is intermingling with the stroke of dimpled fists. At last you open the door, and there bursts in a snowy flurry of night gowns, and they bound along, brunette and blonde, wild as young Arabs. The lock that would have confounded burglar, and the bolt that strongest hand could not have broken, flew open at the touch of the tip-end of a baby's finger.

The roughest knock that ever strikes a door is a sheriff's knock as he comes to levy on the furniture. The gentle knock is that of a comforter as she arrives to tell us of the good times coming. The gladdest, merriest ring of the door-bell is at the holiday festival, when six children, after long absence, come to the homestead, all talking at once, and asking questions, without waiting for answers before they ask more, and talking over boyhood and girlhood days, and bringing down the old cradle from the garret, and dressing up mother in her faded wedding dress, and continuing a laugh, and cry, and kiss, and shout, and turn somersaults, and cut up and cut down; till the door-bell is mad at the disturbance, and solemnly vows: "I will never ring again for such a company as this! And it keeps its word. Better each one take a leaf of a Christmas tree, for it is the last one that shall ever grow in that house. The door-bell has told many a lie, pretending that some one worth seeing had come, but this time it told the truth. That was the last holiday scene in which the six mingled. Another bell took up the strain, but it was deep and slow, and the sound came down from the old church belfry as though the door-bell of heaven had tapped at the going in of a soul. Not one of the six was compelled to stand, with weary rip-rip, banging at the celestial door, for the faces of their friends were pressed against the window, watching. And the table was already spread, and the pomegranates, piled up on the caskets, were so ripe that the rinds did burst at the first touch of the lip. And with oldest wine of heaven, more than eighteen hundred years ago by two scarred hands pressed from grapes of Eshcol, they did rise up, chalice gleaming to chalice, and drank: "TO THE RES-CUE!"

STRIKE OF THE COAL MINERS.

Claim They will Fight to the Bitter End.

Hazleton, Pa.—The anthracite mine workers in convention decided to continue the strike of the 145,000 men against the mineowners, and to fight it out to the bitter end. The matter of calling out the engineers, firemen and pump runners will be decided by the delegates tomorrow. The vote to continue the suspension was as follows: Total vote cast, 811 for strike, 461½; against strike, 349½; majority for strike, 111½. President Mitchell, however, in compliance with the rules of the United Mineworkers, announced to the public that the action of the convention was unanimous.

The step taken after practically considering the matter for two months has wiped out the uncertainty of the situation, and it is freely predicted that the most serious labor struggle in the history of the country, if not of the world, is about to begin. That is the view taken by nearly every miner. While the leaders are cautious and will not forecast their actions, it is not unlikely that the miners' fight will be carried into the bituminous coal region and into other fields of industry. Mine workers for 18 months have been looking forward to the strike that is now upon them. They have saved their money and are considered to be in better shape today for a fight than they were in the great strike of 1900. That struggle ended in the mineowners giving the men a 10 per cent. advance after a six weeks' suspension.

Washington News.

Washington—The Senate by a vote of 45 to 24, passed the bill providing for a union railway station in this city, to be erected by the Pennsylvania Railway at an expense of several million dollars.

The bill was amended so as to give any railroad, now or hereafter, authorized to enter this city, the right to use the station on terms that may be agreed upon, or in default of agreement, the terms are to be prescribed by the District Supreme Court.

The twenty-four votes against the bill were all those of Democrats, excepting that of Mr. Hansbrough, of North Dakota. He offered an amendment to have the District of Columbia build and own the terminal station, but it received only three votes besides that of Mr. Hansbrough.

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company is not anxious for the bill to become law, as it has all the authority it wants to construct a station under the law passed at the last session of Congress, but it has announced its willingness to construct a union station at a large additional cost, simply to accommodate the district.

The bill as passed provides for the elimination of grade crossings, for a tunnel to connect the Baltimore & Ohio and the Pennsylvania Railroads, for a viaduct and elevated terminal to the Union Station at Massachusetts and Delaware avenues and for a union station, "monumental in character," and to cost not less than \$4,000,000.

The bill as passed was the original plan of the committee, with the addition of the amendment that the station shall be open to all railways now or hereafter entering the district.

The President to-day sent the following nominations to the Senate:

George Randolph, United States Attorney Western District of Tennessee.

Postmasters—Maryland, Henry C. Conaway, Berlin; Charles W. Farrow, Snow Hill.

INQUIRING INTO

BROOKS TRAGEDY.

Florence Burns Again Under Fire.

New York.—At the coroner's investigation into the shooting of Walter S. Brooks, in the Glen Island Hotel, on February 14 last, Foster L. Backus, counsel for Florence Burns, requested T. C. Wells, who was Brooks' business partner, to explain some labels used by Brooks in his business, labels of a milk company. Coroner Brown asked what he intended to prove his line of questioning.

"I intend to show," Mr. Backus replied, "that these labels were put on tins of rotten milk; that the health authorities interfered; that Brooks turned state's evidence in five cases to save himself, but that as a result his business was ruined, and that he had to postpone his marriage. I shall prove this by Brooks' letters to Florence Burns and by reputable witnesses."

Counsel's purpose, he declared, was to show that Brooks went to the hotel practically ruined and intended to commit suicide. Witness could not explain the labels.

Joseph Wilson, at present an inmate of Elmira Reformatory, testified that Miss Burns told him she loved Brooks; that she had heard he was running after another girl and that if he threw her over he (Brooks) would suffer for it.

Several other witnesses repeated testimony given by them before Justice Mayer.

There was a sensation when his mother interrupted the proceedings to say that her son had once been drugged when in the company of Florence Burns. A witness had just testified that he, Brooks, and the Burns girl had been drinking together, when Mrs. Brooks jumped up and cried: "that was the time my son was drugged."

Attempted Robbery.

Harpers Ferry, W. Va.—A futile attempt to burglarize was made upon the stores of William O. Rau and Brent Nichols, in this place, and suspicion rests upon a strange negro who has been around for several days, and for whom a warrant has been issued. He forced an entrance through the front window by breaking the glass and left considerable blood in his tracks. He took Mr. Rau's meat-cleaver from his counter and prized the side of his cash register open, but desisted from some cause before reaching the money drawer. It contained, however, but 19 cents. He proceeded then to Mr. Nichols', where he made an entrance, also, but was scared away by Minor Nichols, who sleeps in the store, and was here also foiled in his search for booty.

W. S. Stenger has bought the Philadelphia Record for \$2,874,800. It is said W. R. Hearst is the money backer.

THE TRAGEDY IN SAN PIERE.

More Awful than at First Reported. The Greatest Calamity of Modern Times. The Island is Sinking and the People are in Terror.

Kingston, St. Vincent, B. W. I.—No person has yet been able to approach within eight miles of the new crater of the Soufriere volcano. But, judging from what can be seen from a considerable distance, the old lake at the summit of the mountain has disappeared. The numerous fissures in the mountain's sides continue to throw out vapor, and the subterranean murmurings and tremblings indicate continued unrest. During the afternoon of Monday a dense volume of steam and smoke rose from the volcano and the whole island was covered by a peculiar mist. The inhalation of noxious vapors here is increasing the spread of sickness.

An ambulance corps from the Island of Barbadoes has arrived here. Starvation threatens the poorer classes of the afflicted district.

Nearly every remaining negro hut in the Carib country contains decayed bodies. Mutilated bodies are tied with ropes and dragged to the trenches, where they are buried. Sometimes bodies are cremated.

Scientists who have come here from the British Island of Trinidad predict another volcanic eruption on St. Vincent within a short time.

The present uneasiness of the inhabitants of the island is increased by the continuous agitation of the volcanic craters.

Friday morning, May 9, large stones and volcanic dust fell in the neighborhood of Georgetown for two hours, terrifying the people there. A cloud of hot vapor then passed over that part. Two eruptions of less magnitude than the first occurred Saturday, May 10, and from then until to-day fire and smoke have been ascending, at intervals from the craters.

Owing to the great heat it is still impossible to approach the Soufriere volcano from the leeward side.

Interesting discoveries have been made regarding physical changes on St. Vincent resulting from the eruptions. Several fissures have been observed on La Soufriere. The estate of Walibou has disappeared and has been replaced by an inlet of the sea. Richmond, an estate adjacent to Walibou, which was formerly flat, and upon which there were several laborers' cottages, has been completely buried, and out of the estate there now arises a large ridge of ground. It is believed that the Rabacci crater in the Windward district of the island, has also erupted.

From a distance La Soufriere, although less violent, still wears a cap of dark clouds, which is illumined every now and then by flashes of red light.

Volcanic dust fell here again yesterday. But, fortunately, there have also been several heavy rain showers, which have washed away the dust from the grass and restoring verdure to the fields. The condition of the atmosphere is also apparently improving.

Owing to the destruction of several estates, the sugar and arrowroot industries of St. Vincent are seriously injured.

Destitution prevails among the laboring classes, who are without homes, without clothes and hungry. Nearly 2,000 deaths on this island have been reported. Bodies have been discovered in houses in like attitudes, presenting gruesome spectacles. There are decomposed bodies in many houses, and, in order to guard against disease, it will probably be necessary for the authorities to burn these dwellings. Owing to the many difficulties in the way of those who have the matter in hand, hundreds of bodies have not yet been interred.

As wide areas of ground which formerly produced breadstuff have been devastated, there is to-day an abnormal demand for breadstuffs, and a consequent scarcity of food supplies. The prices on food are advancing. The destruction of the livestock of the island has also caused a rise in the price of meat.

A British warship has arrived here from Trinidad, bringing provisions for the relief of the sufferers.

New Orleans, La.—Passengers who have arrived on the steamer Breakwater from Nicaragua report volcanic disturbances and earthquakes in that Republic apparently connected with the recent similar disturbances in Guatemala. The center of the disturbances was the old volcano Momotombo, which lies near the northwest end of Lake Managua, a continuation of Lake Nicaragua, and not far from the capital Managua.

The volcano, which has never been entirely extinct, began smoking several weeks ago. Latterly it has been discharging showers of ashes accompanied by great quantities of smoke with a rumbling noise. This was followed by an earthquake that destroyed the docks at Momotombo, at the foot of the mountain and the terminus of the railroad running from the lake to Corinto on the Pacific.