

rights but more especially with the wrongs of whites, natives and the stranger within the gates. "Now I have done speaking about Mrs. Cunningham," as Herodotus would say.

Now Mrs. Thorpe was one of those fair large women whose bodily frame would seem to entitle them to domineer, were it not joined with the spirit of a mouse. Not even Mrs. Cunningham's sage and eloquent lectures could raise even the ruffle of a breeze between the young wife and her spouse, to whom she deferred in everything, and gladly; partly from positive weakness of will, partly from that complete confidence and pride in J. T. which made him feel that he must be really about the ablest man in town. Over such a nature one can hardly domineer, the occasion is lacking; you can hardly fight non-resistance. And as he, like all young lawyers and some old ones, really loved to brow-beat his friends and could find at home so little ground for even a well conducted argument he set himself to combat her prejudices and regulate her antipathies.

Now Mrs. Thorpe's antipathy was snakes, and with reason; an antipathy compounded in equal parts of genuine fear and a moral loathing for a reptile that knew too much of all that was deep and primeval and corrupt. On one occasion they had returned to their bungalow, faithfully swept and garnished by a set of servants not worse than the average, who emulously took the entire Hindoo pantheon to witness that their duties had been well performed, and especially that no snake lingered in the garden of Eden enlightened by the presence of their mistress. Nevertheless, within the first few hours after his return, Mr. Thorpe killed a full-sized and flourishing female cobra neatly coiled on a blanket in Mrs. Thorpe's own private and particular room. Mrs. T. helped her husband kill the beast, by screaming vigorously and hanging on his right arm, to Mr. T's sublime disgust. Which being expressed, his wife fled in tears to the garden. Careful search failed to show any other intruder about the house and grounds, and Mr. Thorpe was content. Yea, more. He

was determined that his wife should be equally content. Determined that she should not trade upon a pet antipathy, to the increase of her own nervousness and his discomfort. For he was of a hardened spirit, this J. T., and set himself to cure her antipathy once for all and in a very practical way, worthy of his enlightened omniscience! Here was the chance to frighten her out of her fear of a snake.

Coiling the dead reptile neatly in position on the bed in his wife's room and calling his wife in, he nimbly skipped out and locked the door upon her. After a moment of silence a piercing shriek rent the air, then another and another in quick succession. But the Monumental Ass. in the next room calmly rubbed his hands and grinned at the obvious success of his plan. It was exactly what he expected. The servants crowding in were ordered back and told that the shrieks would cease in a short time,—and they did! When all was still the M. A. opened the door. Yes, all was still, as he had expected. And yet the mere suspicion dawned upon him that perhaps his success had been too complete. His wife lay at full length on the floor with her head jammed against the jealousies leading into the veranda, which were lashed fast. She lay so still that even the steady heart of the M. A. seemed to pause in its beating and his conscience to suggest whether this were well. To doubt succeeded horrible certainty when the servants in horror pointed out a fine specimen of cobra, a full-grown male, gliding along the floor close to the opposite wall of the room; and ventured then the information that these serpents always go in pairs and one follows up the other and haunts the place where its mate has been killed. Important information if stated in time,—not now!

For about five minutes the M. A. debated blowing out his brains. Then he made the mistake of his life,—he did not do it! So said half the men of his acquaintance when they heard of the tragedy, while the other half agreed that the exceeding mistake was in debating the matter with him-