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THE RIDE OF COLLINS GRAVES.

AN INCIDENT OF THE FLOOD IN MASSACHUSETTS, MAY 16, 1874.

No song of a soldier riding down
To the raging fight of Winchester town;
No song of a time that shook the earth
With the nation's throe at a nation's birth;
But the song of a brave man, free from fear
As Sheridan's self or Paul Revere;
Who risked what they risked,—free from strife
And its promise of glorious pay,—his life.

The peaceful valley has waked and stirred,
And the answering echoes of life are heard;
The dew still clings to the trees and grass,
And the earlier toilers smiling pass,
As they glance aside at the white-walled homes,
Or up the valley where merrily comes
The brook that sparkles in diamond rills
As the sun comes over the Hampshire hills.

What was it that passed like an ominous breath?
Like a shiver of fear or a touch of death?
What was it? The valley is peaceful still,
And the leaves are afire on the top of the hill;
It was not a sound, nor a thing of sense—
But a pain, like a pang in the short suspense
That wraps the being of those who see
At their feet the gulf of eternity.

The air of the valley has felt the chill;
The workers pause at the door of the mill;
The housewife, keen to the shivering air,
Arrests her foot on the cottage stair,
Instinctive taught by the mother-love,
And thinks of the sleeping ones above.

Why start the listeners? Why does the course
Of the mill-stream widen? Is it a horse—
"Hark to the sound of his hoofs," they say—
That gallops so widely Williamsburg way?

God! What was that, like a human shriek,
From the winding valley? Will nobody speak;
Will nobody answer those women who cry
As the awful warnings thunder by?

Whence come they? Listen! And now they hear
The sounds of the galloping horse-hoofs near;
They watch the trend of the vale, and see
The rider, who thunders so menacingly,
With waving arms and warning scream
To the home-filled banks of the valley stream.
He draws no rein, but he shakes the street
With a shout and the ring of the galloping feet,
And this the cry that he flings to the wind:
"*To the hills for your lives! The flood is behind!*"

He cries and is gone; but they know the worst—
The treacherous Williamsburg dam has burst!
The basin that nourished their happy homes
Is changed to a demon—it comes! it comes!
A monster in aspect, with shaggy front
Of shattered dwellings to take the brunt
Of the dwellings they shatter,—white-maned and hoarse,
The merciless terror fills the course.

Of the narrow valley, and rushing raves,
With death on the first of its hissing waves,
Till cottage and street and crowded mill
Are crumbled and crushed. But onward still,
In front of the roaring flood is heard
The galloping horse and the warning word.
Thank God, that the brave man's life is spared!
From Williamsburg town he nobly dared
To race with the flood and to take the road
In front of the terrible swath it mowed.
For miles it thundered and crashed behind,
But he looked ahead with a steadfast mind:
"*They must be warned!*" was all he said,
As away on his terrible ride he sped.

When heroes are called for, bring the crown
To this Yankee rider; send him down
On the stream of time with the Curtius old:
His deed, as the Roman's, was brave and bold,
And the tale can as noble a thrill awake,
For he offered his life for the people's sake.

THE LADY IN THE BLUE HAT.

The Marquis de V. has an income of 200,000 francs a year. Hence the sun does not rise in his apartments until 11 o'clock. His valet superintends the brushing of his master's clothes with one eye, and reads the morning paper with the other. The bell of the outer door rings, and the valet, after the bell has rang two or three times, and he has heard the voice of one of his master's intimate friends outside, finally consents to go and open it.

"I have been making a racket here for twenty minutes," said the visitor, Paul de L., bounding into the room.

"Monsieur did well to knock," said Celestin, the valet, following him with a slow and dignified step. "He might have rung till the day of judgment, for my servant was brushing my master's clothes, and I was reading my morning paper. It is remarkably bright and interesting this morning."

Paul explains to the valet that he has come to persuade his master to commit matrimony, but finds in Celestin a foe to his project. For Celestin is afraid that a lady at the head of the house will either dismiss him or give him something to do. So Paul asks to be shown to the apartment of his friend.

The valet knocks directly at the door of his master's bed room.

"Who's there?"

"I, monsieur," said the valet, "I have come to announce the arrival of Monsieur Paul."

"Paul! Let him come in! Paul!" he cried in a louder tone, "why the devil didn't you come? What are you putting on all that style with me for?"

"I have come to talk about matrimony," said Paul, entering.

"Matrimony! thunder!" cried Mederic, bouncing out of bed. "You go and order breakfast," he cried to the valet, "I need all the strength I can muster, as for you Paul, don't lisp a word of your outlandish idea until we are fairly seated at table."

"This looks bad," said the viscount to himself.

"That's all right," said Celestin, the valet, casting a triumphant glance at Paul.

During breakfast Paul fairly spread himself in cracking up marriage. He proved conclusively that it stood in the first rank of civil contracts and was altogether the most admirable of the sacraments of the church. As he listened to himself he became infatuated with his own eloquence, in fact soared at times to almost inaccessible heights, and Mederic disputed his arguments with considerable ingenuity.

After an hour or two of this sort of thing Paul exclaimed: "Let's get down to business We ought to have begun with it. I have a cousin who is a widow. She has such blind confidence in me that she is willing to accept any one I'll pick out as a new husband for her. You're the man I like best, so you shall have her."

"I don't want her."

"She's a pearl."

"Not any for me, thank you."

"She's an angel."

"All the same to me."

"She's young and pretty."

"What of it?"

"She's rich and well educated."

"That's none of my business."

"Sunday she'll attend morning mass at Saint Roch. She'll be at the right of the pulpit and she'll wear a blue hat with white trimmings. Go and see her."

"Not I"

"If she don't fix you at the very first glance, I'll never say another word."

"You've already said too much."

"I won't stir until you promise to go there Sunday."

"Well—I'll go—but what good will that do *you?*"

"You'll be charmed."

"I'd like to bet on it."

"I'd be betting on a certainty."

"What's this treasure's name?"

"I'll tell you when you've seen her—that is if the first sight of her does the business for you."

THE BLUE HAT.

Mederic was at the church door at the time appointed, looked in and saw nobody answering the description. But as he turned away, he met in the church porch a charming woman whose hat *seemed* to him to be blue with white trimmings, or was it not rather white with blue trimmings? He saw blue gauze, white satin, blue tulle and white silk capriciously tangled together—was this a blue hat? One needed to be more than a man to decide the question. The lady took a seat at the left of the pulpit.

"That settles it," said Mederic. "Paul is right. She is very good-looking. I'd like to know her name and where she lives."

"It seems as if that gentleman were following me," said the lady in the blue hat, as she entered a moderately pretentious house on Algiers street after the service.

Mederic learned from the porter's wife, that the blue-hatted woman had been a widow three years, that her name was Arabella P——de B., that she had lodgings on the fourth flight above the basement, which, it must be admitted, was hard to distinguish from the fifth story. Almost before he knew it, he was ringing the bell of her apartments and has been admitted. As he waited he began to cast about for some pretext for calling on her. He decided not to mention Paul's name until forced to do so. At that moment the door opened.

"Madame Arabella!" stammered Mederic, bowing.

"I am she," replied the lady, who seemed even prettier without the blue hat.

After a prolonged silence Mederic began:

"I have—come—I have—come—"

"Oh, I understand," exclaimed Madame Arabella, vivaciously, "you are the professor of German, and you have come on the recommendation of my friend, Madame Delattre. I beg pardon for not having aided you a little in introducing yourself. What hour can you devote to my daughter's instruction?"

"Any hour you like," he replied, bent on keeping up the romantic adventure even to undertaking lessons in German of which he didn't know a single word.

"Are you free from 9 to 10?"

"I am at liberty at all times—I would say, my pupils have already gone for the summer into the country," he replied, perceiving that he was talking like a fool.

"I can then, without taking too much liberty, ask you to come any day at any hour?"

"Exactly so, madame."

"Madame Delattre has been paying you, I think, $10 for fifteen lessons. I will give twice that for thirty."

"Your kindness quite overwhelms me, madame."

"To-morrow, then, sir."

"To-morrow!"

"At nine."

"Farewell, madame."

"Good day, sir."

The Marquis bowed respectfully and went out.

Arrived at home the Marquis dispatched a note to his friend, Paul, telling him not to say another word about or to the lady in the blue hat without his permission.

THE GERMAN LESSONS.

Madame Arabella presented her little pink and white daughter, about 6 years old, to her "professor." Mederic kissed her forehead; made her recite the first chapter of the French grammar, and taught her a few words of the Flemish dialect, which they speak in the cities of French Flanders. These words, hard as rocks, raised the "goose flesh" on the lady in the blue hat who assisted at her daughter's first lesson, dressed in a *negligé* costume, which developed quite lusciously her exquisite beauty. He discovered that she was sweet as honey, and all who lived with her positively adored her. At a quarter to 11 she was obliged to dismiss him, which she did, as she did everything, with charming grace.

At the second lesson he discovered that she had an arm whiter than snow, and a neck delicately poised on her breast and shoulders, and she came and went in his presence as if he were not a man. He was intoxicated with pleasure, in spite of a cloud which obscured his sky because she so steadily mistook him for a teacher of languages.

At the appointed hour for the third lesson, his pupil had not returned from her bath. The "Professor" was requested to wait. The lady in the blue hat was singing in the adjoining parlor, and he discovered that she had the voice of Patti, the method of Madame Carvalho and the soul of Frezzolini. Pretty soon the little girl came in, the lesson in German began and the singing stopped. Mederic was already fond of his little pupil, but just then he could have sent her away to Peru or even to China. His bad humor melted like snow before the sun the moment her mother entered the room.

At the fourth lesson the Marquis discovered that Madame Arabella was well acquainted with matters which women are not in the habit of bothering their heads with. That Charles X. was not the son of Charles IX. The next lesson proved to him that she had a pretty fair tincture of geography in her education. At least she knew where the handsome crystal dishes that litter up the cupboards are made—that the manufacturing corporations at Lyons sell handsome silk dresses, and the "Indian Company" beautiful laces. He discovered subsequently that she had the most delicate tact, for she asked him if he would not like a part of his pay in advance, since his pupils were all in the country.

"I have the money now," she hastened to add, as he forgot himself and stared at her like a lout, "and it will be more convenient for me to give fifty francs now than 100 at the end of the month."

He also perceived with great pleasure that she had a taste for his conversation. After his "lesson" was done, he sat hours together chatting with her, holding his little "pupil" on his knee. She even knew that there was such a thing as the Revue de Deux Mondes in existence. She had elegant taste in jewels, loved the pictures of the best masters, had a passionate enthusiasm for whatever was good, noble, and beautiful. All these discoveries overwhelmed him with pleasure, because he had the means for gratifying her most unbounded dreams.

He had reached the eighth lesson in his course, he was in the full tide of his successful effort to teach his pupil the Flemish dialect, when the house-maid handed her mistress a note which informed her that her friend had secured a German teacher for her.

"My slow-going friend," said the lady, laughing, "I am going to reply that luckily you didn't wait for her tardy letter of introduction."

"I have something to tell you, Madame," feebly articulated Mederic, who very well comprehended that he must hurry up the denouement if he did not wish his comedy to be changed to melodrama. The genuine professor was liable to enter at any moment.

"Good heavens! my dear sir, what is the matter? Are you going to faint away?" cried Madame Arabella.

"Madame, I have a confession to make."

"A confession? To *me?*"

"Madame, I love you."

Then Mederic talked to her for an hour by the watch. He executed a thousand variations upon that same theme—"I love you." And what is surprising, his declaration was not idiotic, in spite of his loving sincerely. The lady was naturally disturbed, but she was too much of a Parisian woman to show her emotion.

"*If* I loved *you*, sir," she said, raising her beautiful eyes to his, what *would* become of us? I am not good at constructing high-sounding phrases. I will only repeat what probably you know now. I was an orphan when I married. I had a great name and a small dowry, and my husband was very little richer than I. I endured our moderate circumstances without complaining, but he guessed the trouble and undertook to increase our means by speculations, which ended disastrously, so that when he died he owed 100,000 francs. I did not hesitate a second to give up my small fortune in order to bequeath to my daughter an unblemished name. A rich relation settled an income on me on condition of my never marrying again. Tell me, sir, can I deprive this little daughter of those luxuries which are necessities to so delicate a child? I said, and I repeat, what *would* become of us, if *I* loved *you*, since you are dependent on teaching German for your living?"

"It is in that, Madame, that my crime looms up in gigantic proportions. *I do not know a word of German.*"

"What! You have not even *that* resource?"

"No," said Mederic, smiling, "but I have an income of 200,000 francs which, perhaps, will partly make up for it."

Then he confessed everything—his name, his visit to the church and his talk with his friend—except that he did not mention his friend's name, as he wished to devise a theatrical sensation for the latter's benefit. He had so submissive an air, his speech was so persuasive, that the lady of the blue hat consented to allow the extenuating circumstances in his favor. She did not even insist very strenuously upon knowing the name of the officious friend who had trumpeted her merits so loudly.

"Doubtless," she said gaily, "it is one of my banker's friends who persists in thinking I have done a fine thing, as the world goes. We live in a time so morally disturbed that they who do their plain duty are regarded as heroes."

Mederic went home intoxicated with joy. His head was in the clouds, and he felt like stopping now and then, lest he should knock off a star or two. And yet the lady had by no means said "yes." Still less had she said "no."

THE FRIEND AND COUSIN.

The Marquis found his friend Paul at his house.

"My dear Mederic," said Paul, "I have a confession to make. When I came here three weeks ago, I swear by my hoary-headed ancestors, that I had the most disinterested desire to see you married. I had a pearl in my hand that I would have given you on the spot; but it is well to distrust your first thought, because that is only *good*—it is *second* thoughts which are *best*. When I found myself alone, I still said: 'Yes, Mederic shall be happy, I haven't a better friend in the world.' But as I was walking along I began to reflect: 'Yes, I have a better friend now than Mederic—that friend is myself.' I returned to the beautiful widow's, and begged her *not* to go to the Church of Saint Roch, or if she couldn't possibly stay away, at least not to wear the pretty hat she wanted to wear for the first time, for good luck. She laughed, she blushed, she laughed again. Then I mustered up all my courage. I said to her, 'I love you, my cousin.' And she said: 'My cousin, I know it.' And so my dear Mederic I have come to invite you to the wedding. But, now, take my head, for I have betrayed friendship. One word, however: I have come and come again several times in hopes of meeting you. I believed you had closed your doors on me, and felt like taking offense, but finally contented myself with writing to you."

"I did not get your letter."

"I thought you were furious at not seeing the lady in the blue hat."

"I *did* meet her, and met her to such purpose that I am engaged to her and now ask *you* to *my* wedding. Only it was a white and blue hat."

"I did not get *your* letter."

"I don't understand it," cried the two friends in chorus, with as much unison as if they had been actors at the Opera Comique.

"I want to own up," muttered the valet, falling on his knees before his master. "There is only one culprit here, and that's me! First, I told Monsieur the Marquis that the Monsieur the Viscount was out of town; second, I closed the door on Monsieur the Viscount. I suppressed the letters of both gentlemen. To be brief, I acted like a rascal and, what is harder to admit, like a fool. I wanted to prevent my master from marrying, and I was ass enough to put him in the way of it. If it hadn't been for my folly you two gentlemen would have met the next day after that fatal Sunday. You'd laughed a little about it at the club. Monsieur the Marquis would have retired from the affair as soon as he perceived the feelings of the Viscount toward his cousin and there would have been an end of it.

"The rascal is right," cried Paul, "He has been the necessary obstacle which makes these things successful."

"Well," responded Mederic, "if my wife doesn't take a dislike to him, I'll keep him."

"Monsieur the Marquis does me great honor," said the valet, "but I am bound to leave his service. I have sworn to follow the example of my ancestors, who died bachelors, every one of them, and who never would consent to go out to service with married people. I must religiously keep the promise I made to myself."

CONCLUSION.

Mederic married the lady with the blue hat. Paul married his cousin. The two households are perfectly happy, and there are plenty of children, too. Mederic has given up his German lessons. The little girl has an excellent teacher, but she thinks he doesn't begin to teach her as much or as well as her dear papa.

"I have been intending for several years," said the Marquis one day to his wife, "to ask an explanation; but we've always had something else to talk about when we've been alone. What kind of a hat was it you wore at St. Roch the first time I saw you? Was it blue or white?"

"Blue"

"Why?"

"Because I ordered a blue hat of my milliner. If I'd ordered a white one she would have given me the same hat, but it would have been white."—*Translated for the Detroit Free Press.*

THE ROTHSCHILDS.

A SKETCH OF THE CELEBRATED HOUSE.

A short time after the battle of Jena, in which Napoleon broke down the armed opposition of Prussia, William I., Elector of Hesse Cassel, flying through Frankfort, summoned to an audience a prominent banker of this city.

"I am one of those," he said, "who trusted to the faith of that faithless perjurer and enemy of his race, Napoleon Bonaparte. He promised to preserve my territory from violation and to treat me as a neutral prince. He has forced me to fly from my own domain, has already seized it, is to obliterate it and make it a part of the Kingdom of Westphalia. I have with me about five millions. Take them! Keep them in security until my rights are restored and recognized. How much interest will you allow me?"

"In the disturbances of the time," replied Mayer von Rothschild, "I can promise nothing. It must be a very low rate if any. You will have to trust me to pay what I can, when I am able to afford it."

"Very well," replied the Elector, "my chief purpose is to secure them. From what I learn of you I cannot do better than to trust you. I must bid you adieu."

Rothschild departed, received the Elector's treasure on deposit, was enabled to loan it and reloan to some advantage, but paid no interest on it for eight years, after which he paid two per cent. for nine years, and returned it to the Elector's son in 1823.

Such, at least, according to the legend, is the origin of that wonderful house of Rothschild whose existence and operations are surrounded with something of the mysteries and dazzling spectacular display found chiefly in fairy romances and Arabian Night's tales.

During all the troubles of Europe in the early part of the century Rothschild remained undisturbed. He negotiated two loans of four million dollars each for Denmark, which, contemptible now, were enormous then. A large wholesale "Yankee notions" or dry goods house might surpass them to-day. Mayer Rothschild had the faculty of turning all chances to good account.

Just before his death in 1812 he called together his six sons—Nathan, Solomon, Anselme, Karl, Mayer, and James, and said to them:

"I want you to promise me on your solemn oaths always to remain united in carrying on the operations of our house."

They swore as he asked, but after his death separated; or rather they divided Europe between them. They established their houses at Paris, London, Frankfort, Vienna and Naples. Each one shared in the general operations of the house, but had individual supervision over his particular field. It was not a central bank with different branches; there were five different houses, which if occasion required, acted as one.

The Emperor of Austria ennobled all of them as if they were all the eldest, which is an Austrian custom. Their arms are five golden arrows. By a remarkable coincidence, an ancient writer predicted that Charon, who, according to the old myth, ferried people over the Styx, or river of death, and who gets his pay from the passengers, would have a large income in the year 1855, and in that year, Nathan, the eldest, and Solomon and Karl all died. Everybody expected, as each one dropped off, to learn at least the secrets of that enormous banking house. But there was not the smallest chance to look into their big books. Another Rothschild stood ready to take them from the dead men's hands. The firm is a dynasty. You can learn from it only that it has a secret of making money.

One of the great strokes of the Rothschild house was made when Nathan, the London banker, and an English citizen, followed close in the rear of Napoleon, in 1815, as if he foresaw the fall of that giant. The sun had not set on the battle of Waterloo before the banker was well on his way to London. He bought English consols, at that time very low in price. When London heard the great news, consols rose and Rothschild sold. This transaction was entirely Rothschild-like. In their transactions chance is eliminated as much, perhaps, as it is possible in human affairs. The conception of these grand schemes are clear and simple, however vast. The accomplishment alone is difficult, because it requires a rapid glance over the whole field, and large capital. But there is in them indications of genius. In most of these first great operations there is the peculiarity of Christopher Columbus' famous egg trick. Dollars, like soldiers, need to be hurled en masse and at once against a designated point. The Rothschilds in this respect have been the greatest captains of the century.

Capital has displaced men in the world of industry. Formerly a man was a producer or a negotiator, a borrower or a lender. Now, by the substitution of capital, he may be all of these at the same time. In Belgium and Spain the Rothschilds are producers of coal and quicksilver. By virture of the railroads they own they are also carriers; to-day they will be the largest buyers, to-morrow the largest sellers in Europe. Speculation is the fairy of the nineteenth century, and the Rothschilds are its god-sons. Life at the present day has been almost tripled in intensity. A man who dies at 40 years of age has certainly lived more than centenarians of the seventeenth century

Money no longer has a country. The Rothschilds would lend it to Belgium and to Holland when they were mutual enemies; to Austria and to Italy; to France and to Germany; to Antonelli or Victor Emanuel. Though empires go down with a crash, the house of Rothschild remains unmoved. They furnish the money to make war; they furnish it to make peace. The conqueror owes them for his guns; the conquered owes them for his ransom.

Only once was there any disagreement known to have arisen between them. When Naples ceased to be a capital the Baron Adolphe de Rothschild removed his banking house from that city, and demanded, in cash, his share of the common funds—fifteen millions. But perhaps recollecting the oath required by the founder of the house, the affair was arranged, and the different Rothschilds in all times of confusion and trouble have continued to utter the same distinct watchword of business, even as at night the clocks of large cities, regulated by one hand, strike the hours at the same moment.

When steam and electricity came into use the former great strides of speculation were no longer possible. But the Rothschilds anticipated these inventions. The Baron James at Paris, it is said, hastened to scize and use these new levers, which otherwise would have destroyed him. He was the principal projector of the French railways, and is said to have wept tears of joy on sending the first telegram to San Francisco. He had calculated the difference of time between Paris and San Francisco, and knew that the answer would come during the day. He awaited it in feverish silence. It came at the hour he had calculated.

The Rothschilds are for the most part Jews. The tomb of the Paris family is opposite that of Rachel in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise. An "R" is sculptured in relief on the white stone of the modest chapel. The inclosure in front is sown with pebbles. Every Jew who visits a grave leaves a stone.

The project of buying Palestine and reinstating the Jews has been attributed to the Rothschilds, but as they have never taken any steps toward it, it is probable that they either never thought of it or speedily abandoned it.

Many stories are told of their shrewdness, and while some of them are true, more are legendary.

One of the best known is that of the Paris banker, who, when two communists entered his bank and demanded that he share his property with them, gave them each a five-franc piece and told them that was their share as near as he could calculate it.

It was a Rothschild, too, who, while playing cards, was much annoyed by another player, who stopped the game in order that he might find a piece of money that had fallen upon the carpet. Rothschild thereupon folded a bank note, lit it and held it for him, saying, "There, my good man, hurry up while I hold the light."—*Detroit Free Press.*

TIME IS MONEY.

One fine morning, when Franklin was busy preparing his newspaper for the press, a lounger stepped into the store and spent an hour or more looking over the books, etc., and finally, taking one in his hand, asked the shop boy for the price.

"One dollar," was the answer.

"One dollar!" said the lounger; "can you not take less than that?"

"No, indeed; one dollar is the price."

Another hour had nearly passed, when the lounger said:

"Is Mr. Franklin at home?"

"Yes; he is in the printing office."

"I want to see him," said the lounger.

The shop boy immediately informed Mr. Franklin that a gentleman was in the store waiting to see him. Franklin was soon behind the counter, when the lounger addressed him thus:

"Mr. Franklin what is the lowest you can take for that book?"

"One dollar and a quarter," was the ready answer.

"One dollar and a quarter! Why, your young man asked me only a dollar."

"True," said Franklin, "and I could better have afforded to have taken a dollar then than to have been taken out of the office."

The lounger seemed surprised, and, wishing to end the parley of his own making, said:

"Come, Mr. Franklin, tell me what is the lowest you can take for it?"

"A dollar and a half."

"A dollar and a half? Why, you offered it yourself for a dollar and a quarter."

"Yes," said Franklin, "and I had better have taken that price then than a dollar and a half now."

THE RICHEST SILVER MINE IN AMERICA.

It is not generally known that the mine which has turned out the most bullion within the last two years is not a California, Nevada or an Arizona mine, but one situated in Utah. We refer to the Ontario, which from January 26, 1876, to August 1, 1878, produced $2,820,783.91. In the words of the Salt Lake *Tribune:* "Perhaps in no country in the world can be found such another mine, so regular and so rich. The lowest assay from the 500-foot level is $130; and the ore breast (which averages three feet) goes from that figure to $300 per ton. For four months the average battery sample was $110 per ton. It is estimated that the ore in sight at present will run the mill two years. There is at the mill now some 3,000 tons. We regret to hear of the recent fire, by which the hoisting works were destroyed, and that, in consequence of injury to the pumps there is considerable water in the mine."

—The will of Martin Luther, which has long been in the archives of the Evangelical Church of Hungary, has been critically examined by a committee of experts, who, after comparing every word of the manuscript with a number of original letters in Luther's handwriting, have unanimously agreed that it is the genuine handiwork of the Reformer. Up to this time there had been a shadow of doubt as to its genuineness. Concerning wills it is a curious fact that not a scrap of Shakspeare's handwriting is in existence excepting his will (which is by no means very creditable to him).

OUR HOMES.

Houses and farms, bank stocks and bonds are all good things to have, and especially when the dividends fill the capacious pocket-book, and promise comfort, ease and luxury. But it has been observed by thoughtful people that wealth is not an unfailing source of happiness; nay, it has often proved an annoyance and even a burden to life. There is something that often comes with wealth that mars the joys that should accompany it; and, before the owner is aware, it has sapped his humanity, and he stands out soured, vain and selfish; a being to make angels weep and devils laugh and chuckle. When the Savior of men was upon earth He gave an impressive lesson to one who came and inquired what he should do to have eternal life. He said he had kept all the commandments from his youth up, and asked: "What lack I yet?" The answer was: "Go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor." The advice, we are assured, made the young man "sorrow." But the further impressive words were uttered: "I say unto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven." Under such teachings, and with the experiences that wealth brings many evils in its train, it seems strange that the human family should jeopardize every hope, and tire the limbs and worry the brain, and stain the hands in the eager chase for riches. The question should come to-day to these merchants on 'Change, the business man in his counting-room, the professional man in his wearisome study, "What am I striving for at this opening of the year 1879?" Aside from morals and religion, which we leave to the pulpits, what ideas have we formed for a year's happiness? We take it for granted that our readers agree with us that the world was made for happy men and women. Its beauty and variety and bountiful supplies of comforts and luxuries teach us the fact more forcibly than words can express it. Happy men and women are not found outside of happy homes. We pity the millionaire who smiles at the simplicity of the proposition, and equally the man who boasts in his pride that he can purchase with gold this precious commodity. It is something that gold will not buy, and any amount of wealth will not prevent a bankruptcy and its banishment from the home. If a single reader at the opening of this new year feels that his home is not the ideal place he has in the years agone cherished and anticipated, it would be well to stop and inquire into the reason.

Does the tired wife, shut up in the nursery, with annoying duties of domestic life, for days, and weeks, and months, light up with a smile at your coming? Do the little ones stand at the window and peer into the gathering gloom to note your earliest approach and make the house resound with joy when the door swings to admit you? No? Well, there is something wrong. Husband and wife might well stop and ask in all sincerity how shall we "make home happy" the coming year? Wealth alone will not do it; the honors of the world and the rounds of fashionable life soon grow insipid, and we must ever turn to the home, whether palatial or humble, to find this object of life. If there were some patent method for obtaining it, or if it could be purchased, what a demand there would be! And yet when it lies at our doors, or is placed in our hands, we hesitate to pick it up and fail to grasp it. The fact is, too many are looking for great things and great events, when the sum of human happiness is almost wholly made up of the little and apparently insignificant things about us. It has been said that "familiarity breeds contempt." This can only be true between husband and wife and parents and children, when the nobility of manhood and womanhood has been forgotten and laid aside, and selfishness and vulgarity have taken its honored place. If the occupants of some of the homes who have seen happiness departing during the past year, would, in turning the new leaf, remember some of the lessons they once well understood, the change would be magical. Let the husband try for three months to enter the house and leave it as he did in the days of his wooing. Let the wife practice the easy charms that won the lover. Neither has forgotten, and there is more than "millions in it." It won't be a costly experiment; and if the trial of a year does not make every room of your home, humble though it may be, ring with happiness, then you may set it down that the devil has a mortgage and will likely foreclose, and the sooner the better. But do not give up too easily, for of all desirable and beautiful things of this life, a happy home stands first. It is a kind of foretaste of the home beyond, whose "gates are never shut," and "whose glory no man can estimate." As our sons and daughters grow up and go out from their homes, although they may scatter to remote regions of earth, yet forever arises before their minds the loved spot that sheltered them, and the sweet influences of the home of childhood will protect them from many an evil, and draw them with the sweet voices of the past to noble and heroic achievements.—*Chicago Inter-Ocean.*

—The Columbus (Ohio) *Herald* says that, some time ago, a girl in a paper mill in Delphi, Carrol county, that State, found among the waste paper a couple of $50 bills. The proprietors took them from her and kept them. She sued, and got judgment below, recently affirmed by the Supreme Court, which held that the purchase of waste paper did not give the purchaser a right to unknown valuables found in it as against the finder.

—The Afghan war seems to have what is known as a military promenade. The British soldiers have marched through the Khyber Pass, and as they approached the Afghan capital the Afghan ruler fled, so that England will probably be able to draw her "scientific frontier," which Lord Beaconsfield says she has so sadly lacked.

Varieties.

—Lady Lubbock is a real helpmeet to her husband, the distinguished naturalist. She is an accomplished artist, and taking the keenest interest in his pursuits, she often assists him in illustrating his works.

—The proportion of soldiers who can read and write in the several armies of Europe is as follows: Germany, 965 in 1000; Sweden, 930; England, 860; Holland, 750; Belgium, 700; France, 635; Portugal, 495; Spain, 490; Austria, 460; Italy, 450; Russia, 115; Turkey, 75.

—Great distress prevails among the laboring poor throughout England and Scotland—indeed, throughout the whole of Great Britain. The large manufacturing towns are the chief centres of suffering, thousands of unemployed men and starving women and children being dependent upon charity.

—The cultivation of the nettle plant has been begun near Berlin, with the view of producing therefrom a new textile fiber, and the prospects of success are said to be good. It is said the nettle does not spread into adjoining fields, as it was feared that it would.

—In Mecklenburg-Schwerin capital punishment had been virtually abandoned for 20 years, the Grand Duke having uniformly commuted all sentences, but owing to the increase of serious crimes this practice has has been given up and one execution has alread been performed.

—The pavement of London is one of the greatest marvels of our time. It covers nearly 3,000 acres, two-thirds of which consist of what may be called mosaic work, done in the plain style, and the other third of smooth flagging. The paved streets number over 5,000, and exceed 2,000 miles in length.

—Luther's house at Mansfeld, which remained in the possession of his descendants till the middle of last century, has been bought by a person who intends turning it into a public-house. To avert this catastrophe a committee has been appointed to raise a fund for the purchase and preservation of the building.

—Dr. Abel, the Berlin correspondent of the London *Times*, is a remarkable scholar, reading and translating at sight upwards of seventy different languages. Though by birth a German, his English writing, especially in his letters to the *Times*, is almost perfect in style and diction. During the Berlin Congress Lord Beaconsfield was personally introduced to the scholar, to whom he said: "Dr. Abel, you are the author whom I have most studied."

—Coal-armor is the newest idea among English naval constructors. A coal-bunker eight or ten feet wide, filled with coal, has been found to resist the projectiles of a 4½-ton gun (nearly seven inches bore), even when fired under conditions most favorable for penetration, and experiments have been tried by exploding shells with increased bursting charges in the coal without setting it on fire. For converted merchant steamers and ships where the greater part of the machinery is placed above the water line these bunkers are likely to be employed.

—There is a club in Philadelphia which has been in existence since long before the Revolution. It is called the Fishing Club, and its members, twenty-five in number, meet once a month in a quaint old house on the Schuylkill, built in the days of Queen Anne, which consists only of a kitchen and dining-room. They are all men of wealth and epicures, who practice cookery as a fine art. This monthly dinner consists of but three dishes, which are cooked by the members in turn, the whole day being devoted to the preparation and eating of them. Members are received as probationers for a year, waiting on the others in white aprons during that time.

—Tontine Clubs originated in Italy. They are usually composed of twelve men, who each contribute annually a certain sum, and meet for a yearly dinner. The last living member receives the whole amount. A curious story is told of one of these Clubs, which met for thirty years in a Pennsylvania town. The last survivor, an old, decrepit man, dined alone. When the dinner was over he was to receive the money, but the lawyer found him cold and stiff. The excitement had been too much for his feeble frame. He was dead.

—English papers allude to the probability that the Duke of Sutherland, who in an unlucky hour took four shares of stock in the Glasgow Bank, will be made to pay nigh on to £1,000,000, as the stockholders are personally liable for the bank's entire indebtedness. The duke's net income is about $600,000 per annum, none of which has ever been squandered in fast living. In London his palatial home, Stafford House, has always been open to distinguished foreigners, and it was here that Garibaldi staid when visiting England ten years ago. The duke is a good hearted, liberal, "go-ahead" man, and has applied his fortune generously for the public good. Both Englishmen and Scotchmen sympathize with him in this unexpected and severe misfortune.

—The Yellowstone Geysers are the most remarkable in the world. There are more than 10,000 vents. The Grand Geyser throws a column of water six feet in diameter, 200 feet high, while the stream ascends 1,000 feet. Its eruptions occur every twenty-four hours, and continue twenty minutes. The Giantess throws a stream twenty feet in diameter, sixty feet high, and through this five or six smaller jets 250 feet high. It plays twenty minutes once in eleven hours. The Giant sends up a five-foot column 140 feet high for three hours. The Beehive projects a column three feet in diameter to the enormous height of 219 feet for about fifteen minutes. Old Faithful very regular for fifteen minutes, once an hour, sends up its massive column 6 feet in diameter 100 to 150 feet high.

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