

THE DEAN AND HIS DAUGHTER

CHAPTER XX.

After the pitiful defection of my little curate, there was evidently nothing to be done but to leave Leamington, and to leave it at its best, in the very height of the hunting season.

Then arose the question where to go next. I had begun a semi-nautical habit of consulting maps. So I took down my atlas, and turned over the map of England.

My choice was somewhat narrowed, as I had resolved not to try the sea, except in the very last resource. The sea now only reminded me of George Sabine, and I hated the very sight of it as passionately as I had once loved it.

Ultimately I fixed on the Cathedral town of Salchester. Salchester is of immense antiquity. Its last two syllables point to its having once been an old Roman garrison. Its first, probably to the existence of salt works there; although upon this point antiquarians and county historians are divided.

I decided to stop at the principal hotel for a few days, and then to take lodgings, the best that could be got in the Close itself, or at any rate, as near to the Cathedral as possible; to engage a maid in the town, who would go about telling everybody exactly what I chose to let her see or imagine; and to attend the Cathedral services regularly.

Always think out your plans thoroughly. You thus save an immense amount of time and friction afterwards. And if circumstances baffle your plans, you have only lost an hour or so of quiet thought, which, after all, is in itself a useful mental gymnastic.

Having thought out my plans, I went down to Salchester, stopped for the night at the "Bull," and the next morning secured the very lodgings I wanted, my landlady being no less a person than the wife of one of the lay clerks, or, as they are profanely termed, singing men.

My conduct was method and circumspection itself. I breakfasted at eight. I attended the Cathedral service at ten. I had my little dinner at two. At four, I attended the afternoon service. Then I had tea, and was careful to go to bed at the orthodox and respectable British hour of ten to the minute.

My landlady was charmed with me, and was too well satisfied with the way in which things went on, to make herself at all inquisitive. Even the most uneducated Englishwoman has a certain amount of tact and savoir faire, if you give her as little trouble as possible, and wink at her pretty deviations from the strict paths of rectitude and honesty.

This is why, as a rule, a man in furnished lodgings never quarrels with his landlady, and a woman always invariably manages to do so.

Well, things went on smoothly enough. Before a fortnight was over the wife of one of the Minor Canons called upon me. I had forgotten, by the way, to state that I was passing as Mrs. Allen, and had resolved, instead of risking troublesome falsehoods, to evade or else entirely decline any conversation as to my past life. As I paid my way in current money of the realm, my task was comparatively easy.

Before long I was in the magic circle of the Close, and had actually dined at the Deanery itself, where the Dean, who, unlike my own very reverend father, was really a learned man, and without a grain of worldliness in his composition, was charmed with me.

I was particularly careful not to irritate the women by my dress. I wore always the plainest frocks, of a very simple and ordinary kind. I also, although my hair was as luxuriant as ever, adopted a most discreet little cap. My rustic Abigail always came early to fetch me home. When any of the grandes dames par le monde ecclésiastique honored me with a call, I regaled them with tea which I knew they could not match, as I got it from Twining's, and with the best cake and hot-house fruit that the town afforded.

If the men came, I would have claret on the table. Parsons are, as a rule, good judges of claret, and you are seldom amiss in offering them a large glass of Tanqueray's Larose, and pressing them to take a second. Claret, I explained, was ordered me; and I had indeed been recommended a variety called Haut Brion, which proved, however, I found, to be beyond the range of my somewhat limited purse. Of champagne there was not a trace, and I found life perfectly possible without it. I think what pleased the men most was my undeniably good wine. The women were charmed when they discovered that I had among my effects very valuable jewels which I never wore, although, of course, there was no reason why I should not do so; and they were still more charmed when they found that I did not set my cap at their husbands' and lovers.

Within a few weeks I had established my footing securely. The men all swore by me, in so far and after such fashion as swearing is permissible to ecclesiastical dignitaries. The women had ceased to be jealous, and, if anything, exhorted me to vary the monotony of my seclusion by a little harmless dissipation, some of them going so far as to suggest croquet. Lawn tennis was not as yet considered sufficiently serene and sedate for an old-going Cathedral town.

My rise at last reached its culmination in an invitation to dine at the Palace, where I found the Bishop and his wife all smiles and affability, and had actually the honor of being taken down to dinner by the Archdeacon, a very worthy old gentleman, whose conversation was garrulous, and his manners, to borrow from Sydney Smith, "absolutely and purely archidiaconal."

The Bishop was a dull, well-meaning pompous man. He had been a college tutor at one of the very smallest Cambridge Colleges for the whole of his life, and had managed to forget nearly all the mathematics, which in the days of his full youthful vigor and intellectual force, had landed him triumphantly as bracketed twenty-ninth among the Wranglers.

He had edited Newton's "Principia" and the "Epistle to the Hebrews," preached a number of indifferent University sermons, and, after a brief visit to Palestine with a "personally conducted tour," written a volume called "Galilee and Gennesareth," which reviewers had not even condescended to tear in pieces.

People said that if he lived long enough he would probably be Archbishop, as he

was in every way so eminently safe. By which they meant that whatever his opinions might be, religious, political, or social, he kept them profoundly to himself.

His wife I can deal with almost in a sentence. Mrs. Johnson was one of the numerous daughters of a poor Irish peer. She was vivacious and agreeable, and had evidently once been extremely good-looking. Beyond this one could only say of her what the stranger told Sam Smiley of his frog—that he could see no more points in him than in any other frog.

The conversation was extremely dull and monotonous. The women talked scandal, or, to do them justice, that comparatively harmless, irrelevant, and discursive kind of scandal known as gossip.

The clergy, and the few country gentlemen who were present, deplored the alarming spread of revolutionary principles; but I could not help noticing the church militant was, as a body, much more truculent than were most laymen.

It was a Bishop, now that I remember, who once got up at a public dinner and declared the satisfaction it would give him to see Mr. Joseph Arch dragged through a horsepond.

The Bishop presently did me the honor of addressing me.

"I hope, Mrs. Allen," he observed paternally, and with a gesture of the hands which seemed to indicate an irrational desire to commence the confirmation service at once upon the whole body of his guests, "that you find the air of Salchester suit, what is I fear, and have indeed heard, a delicate constitution."

"Salchester, My lord, suits me in every way. I have actually not had to call in a medical man. I find the air from over the downs as bracing and exhilarating as that of Brighton itself, and the scenery is delightful. I manage to get little drives, and am learning to know the neighborhood."

"It is a very beautiful neighborhood," he remarked. "Most of our Cathedrals have been most happily placed, although I fear, the credit must be given to the Monks who chose the localities long before the Reformation."

Having delivered himself of this astounding piece of ecclesiastical history, he continued:

"A river was necessary to them to provide fish for their fast days, and a sense of duty also impelled them to seek busy centres. It is the necessity of the iron road, and nothing else that has compelled us to give a bishopric to—let us say—Manchester. We must, of course, move with the times."

With this profound remark he ran himself down like a clock, and waited helplessly for me to wind him up.

This was by no means a difficult task as I had pretty well got his measure. I talked to him about anything that came first—about the architecture of the Cathedral, about Tintern Abbey and a still more wonderful Abbey, which, as a matter of fact, I only knew from photographs.

Then I paid a tribute to the memory of Bishop Selwyn and asked his lordship, gazing critically at his chest and shoulders, whether he in his time had rowed in the University eight, or whether his studies had made it impossible for him to so aid his Alma Mater.

He replied, of course, that he had been warmly pressed to take a thwart in the middle of the boat, but that more serious pursuits had compelled him, like Cesar, to thrice refuse the crown of laurel.

When you once get a man who is his physical powers, you have pretty accurately ascertained the length of his tether, and I in my own mind finished my reckoning up of his lordship by putting him in my mental museum of busts as being at any rate capable of giving my very reverend parent what poor George used to call a stone and a half, and a thorough beating over four miles flat.

So far then everything was in my favor; the days passed very pleasantly. I procured an old sure-footed pony and a small basket carriage, just such another as I had at Leamington, only more ecclesiastical in its ensemble and with less suspicion in its appearance of any sinister intention to go and see the hounds thrown off. This I kept on the famous "gig-manity" principle, and was most careful to let it always be at the disposal of any of the ladies at the Close. The pony was not one at all likely to run away with them. And they were welcome to let him down for all that I cared, as his knees were badly broken already.

And by these and other similar little devices I managed to get on famously. After all I was doing no wrong. I was leading my own life—a simple harmless life enough, and being asked no questions had no occasion to tell any lies.

On the whole I think I really enjoyed my life. I mounted fern cases in my windows, procured myself a piping bull-finch and a magnificent collie, hired a good serviceable piano, and began at last to find the spring returning to my step and the roses to my face, and to think dreamily about those pleasant and lovely places so exquisitely described to me by poor George Sabine, and even to plan a visit to some of them.

To one or two ladies, who were rather curious about my antecedents, I replied that my husband had been in the consular service and had died abroad under very painful circumstances. And then I would bring out my pocket-handkerchief.

Some of them inclined to the view that he had killed himself with drink; others were in favor of a fatal duel; others of suicide. They fought the matter out among themselves with some waste of time and loss of temper, but none of them came to me a second time, begging me to determine the dispute in her favor.

I did not meddle with them in any way. I did not try to eclipse them or to compete with their unmarried sisters or their elder daughters. So they unanimously came to the conclusion that my life had been a very sad one, and that the manner in which I bore up against my sorrows, together with my unostentatious mode of life, spoke volumes for my resignation, my humility, and my other Christian virtues.

Women are easily managed enough if you will only abstain religiously from anything calculated in the slightest degree to make them jealous.

Thus, then, I became insensibly an institution in the town—a sort of Jack dawes of Rheims. The life was lax and

monotonous, but not, as my life with Sir Henry had been, tedious. And I almost began to wonder whether I might not possibly "long live the pride of that country side, and at last in the order of sanctity" peacefully depart this life.

And yet, up to now, I had had so much of the vic oragenae that Salchester was beginning to weary me almost as thoroughly as Ossulston had ever done, and, as I felt myself growing stronger and more resolute, I began, as do birds of passage, to feel an indefinite craving for motion and freedom.

After all, I could return to Salchester at any time I pleased. I had been economizing, not as a virtue, but because my income was far beyond the few expenses incurred. Had I lived up to my means I should probably have excited suspicion.

Why then should I not give myself a holiday, pleading that unanswerable plea, a craving for sea air?

We had reached that time of the year—

When a blanket wraps the day,
When the rotting woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamped in clay.

The birds of passage had long left; the days were dismal; and yet I, absolute mistress of myself, had been loitering and hesitating instead of turning straight to the Sunny South.

I had my boxes packed, left P.P.C. cards, adroitly catching all my friends out, and felt thoroughly happy when I found myself alone in the train being rapidly whirled towards London.

Of course I had written to Ethel to announce my determination, and I had paid my maid two months' wages and given her three or four old dresses. Nothing could have been better arranged; and I felt at last recklessly free and triumphant as I toasted my feet before the fire of my little room in Rawlings' Hotel.

That evening I actually took a small private box, and went in one of the hotel broughams to the theater. I wonder if bad habits are hereditary. When I got back to my quarters, I actually found myself ordering a pint of Ferrier Jouet and a plate of dry biscuits.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A NEW RAILROAD TIE.

The Rail Clamped Into Position and Repairs Easily Made.

An inventor has patented a new form of old steel rails which are selected, all the culls being discarded. These rails are run

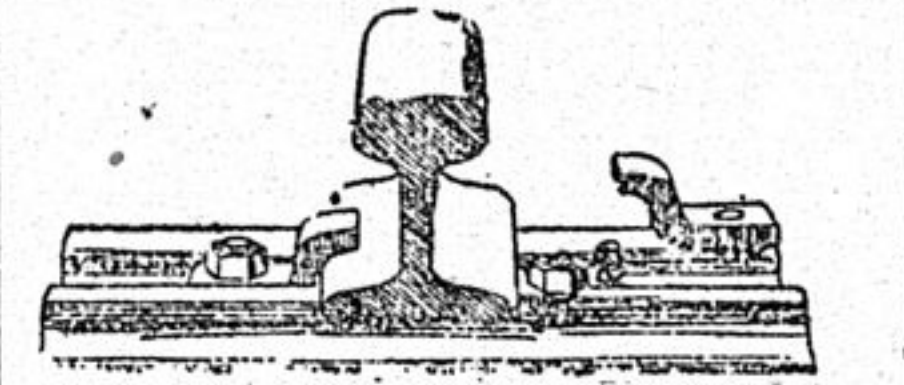


Fig. 1.—ONE CLAMP REMOVED TO DISPLACE RAIL.

at white heat through rolls especially designed for the purpose. Upon coming through the rolls and being sheared to the desired length for street or steam railroads, the tie is plunged into a vat of boiling tar, where it remains for several hours. Taken from this vat it is punched as may be desired

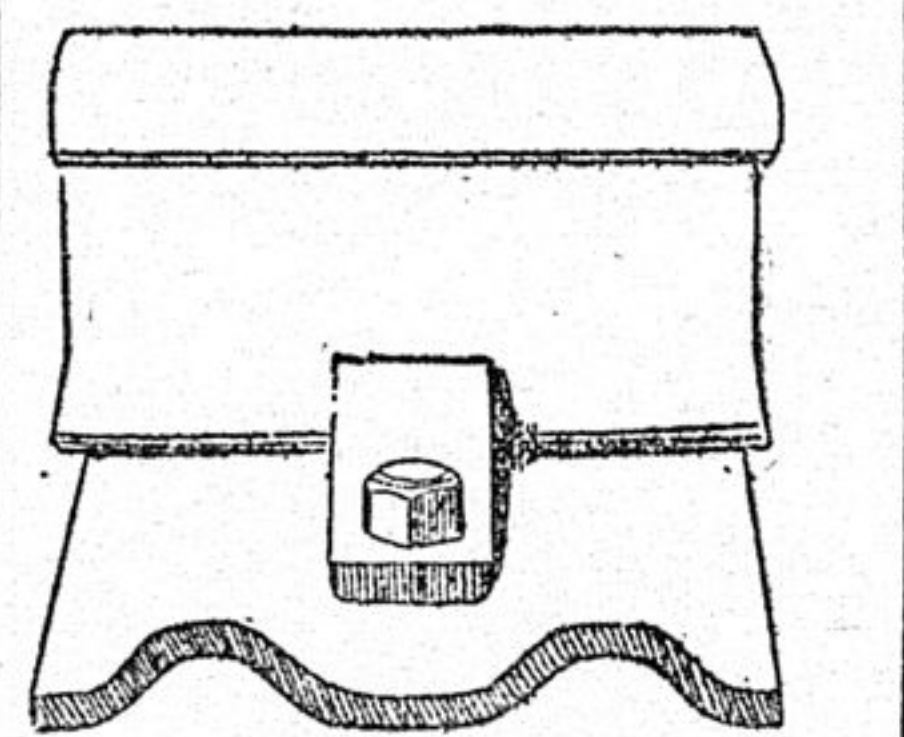


Fig. 2.—SIDE VIEW.

to suit the flange of rail to be used upon it.

The form of the tie is clearly shown in Fig. 2. The rail is held to the tie by

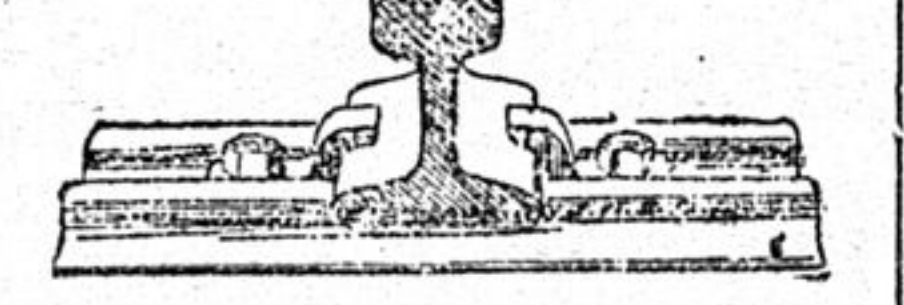


Fig. 3.—TIE WITH RAIL CLAMPED IN POSITION.

clamps as shown in Figs. 1, 2 and 3, and to remove the rail it is only necessary to loosen one of the clamps.

THE CAUTIOUS ELEPHANT.

An Amount of Sagacity Which is Positively Marvellous.

One elephant, which the officer commanding 6-11 Battery of the Royal Artillery lent to assist in extricating some camels which were being engulfed in the quicksands, showed an amount of sagacity which was positively marvellous, writes Major A. G. Leonard. It was with the utmost difficulty that we could get him to go near enough to attach a drag rope to one camel I wanted to rescue. In spite of our being about 50 yards from the bank of the river, he evinced the greatest anxiety, while his movements were made with extreme caution.

Despite coaxing, persuasive remonstrance, and at last a shower of heavy blows dealt upon his head by the exasperated mahout, this elephant stubbornly refused to go where he was wanted, but, with his trunk shoved out in front of him, kept feeling his way with his ponderous feet, placing them before him slowly, deliberately, and methodically, threading all the while with the velvety softness of a cat and taking only one step at a time. Then suddenly he would break out into a suppressed kind of shriek and retreat backward in great haste.

When the animal had nearly completed a circuit of the ground with the same caution and deliberation, he advanced to within 10 yards of the poor camel, but not another inch would he move, though several men were walking between him and the camel without any signs of the ground giving way.

THE RUSSIAN HARVEST.

Discussing the Best Means to Neutralize the Effects of the Coming Plentiful Harvest.

For weeks past the Russian press has been devoting its leading articles to a discussion of the measures best calculated to neutralize the effects of the coming plentiful harvest, and now curiously enough, the question has reduced itself to this simple issue: Should the corn be reaped and gathered in, or would it be wiser to turn sheep and cattle into the fields, and thus lessen the quantity of the produce? It now appears that many landowners refused last year to gather in the harvest, and are determined not to remove it this year either. One landlord, for instance, who owns a large estate near Odessa, and whose facilities for export are therefore exceptionally numerous foreseeing the fall of prices, purchased 1,000 sheep, and unhesitatingly turned them into his fields of wheat. He is said to be so satisfied with the result that he means to do likewise now that a further fall in prices is probable.

The Odessa Novosti, a journal which it is said is usually very well informed upon agricultural questions, has published a series of articles to show that to gather in the harvest this year would be tantamount to throwing good money after bad, for it can only be done at a heavy loss to farmers. Another Russian newspaper says the crisis is due to the mistaken agricultural policy of the Government, which made it possible to forward grain from the furthest corners of Russia to Germany, England, and Belgium for nominal freights, while it was practically impossible to distribute it in neighboring Russian districts where people were dying of hunger. Thus, on the one hand, it was scarce at home, where it was sorely needed, and plentiful abroad, where it was not really wanted. The article concludes by saying:—"Is it not strange, in truth, that at the very moment that our peasants are admittedly suffering from lack of food, our landowners are turning sheep into their corn-fields, and have come to the conclusion that it is not worth while to gather in the harvest?"

CRIMEA'S VETERANS.

Their Reunion in Paris Brought Out Several Lively Centenarians.

Among the many societies in Paris is that of the Old Crimeans, founded in 1857 under the auspices of the late Emperor. The society (our correspondent says) met last evening at Le Mardelay's restaurant to celebrate the first assault on the "mamelon vert," or green earth-work, at Sebastopol. Col. Aronsson presided and was supported by centenarian ex-Sergt. Rose, wearing the Crimean medal, and by another veteran of 100 years old. Rose has also the St. Helena medal, which was worn by two centenarian fellow-diners.

The three veterans lived in the country. Rose came yesterday morning from Sousesmes, near Chambord, accompanied by a grandson aged fifty, and a great-great-granddaughter. He has been for forty years a widower. Were it not for deafness he would not, he says, be painfully aware of his great age. The people of his village are proud to have him among them and his pension and a bit of sandy land aid to keep him in comfort. He was wounded at Mayence. The man on the left of Col. Aronsson was the son of a soldier killed in Jemappes, and was himself brought up in the "Enfants de la Troupe." He was on guard at Compiegne when the Empress Maria Louise arrived there from Vienna to be married.

One hundred veterans who were in the "mamelon vert" affair sat down to dinner. Forty of them were furnished by the Hotel des Invalides. There were but a small number of officers. Marshal Canrobert, was too ill to attend.

Col. Aronsson, in drinking the health of the three centenarians, said they were a proof that hard lines were as good a condition as could be for those who had high hearts and good, generous blood to keep them warm. He proposed the health of the President of the Republic and toasted the Russian nation.

Watches of Parisian Swells.

The latest fad of the Parisian swells is the aluminum timepiece. They are very light in weight, but a trifle more than the works. The cases are in a dull black color—very effective. Some are open-faced, some are often in a small 3-inch disc in the centre, with small gilt hands on the black face of the watch, but they are in all sorts of inlaid decoration in colorings, and the best of it is they are very reasonable in price.

It is the custom at the capital for the gentry to carry this timepiece in the right-hand trousers pocket, along with the keys, coin, matchbox, and other paraphernalia of the masculine pocket. It is, moreover, the wont of the owners to rush the hand down in the pocket with great show of devil-may-care and bring forth the watch, of which the material is unscrutable, from among the other articles, glance at the time, and carelessly replace it with an air of certainty in its infallibility.

The Largest Balloon.

The largest balloon in the world has recently been built in England. Its capacity exceeds 100,000 cubic feet, and it will lift a ton, in addition to its own weight of one and a quarter tons. It is a sphere with a diameter of 57.24 feet, and is enclosed by 120 gores of silk, each eighteen inches wide, sewn together by four miles of stitching. One object in building the balloon has been to enable continuous observations to be made over six days without descending, and to enable this to be done, the bag is a double envelope of silk with a layer of varnish between, and uniting the two skins. The cost of construction has been \$12,500. The balloon made its maiden trip from the Crystal Palace grounds on Wednesday, and after remaining up for four and a half hours in a comparative calm, descended at Hershams. It is proposed to undertake several scientific trips, after which it will be worked as a captive balloon.

THE RUSSIAN STORM CLOUD.

The Perilous Position of the Czar of Russia—Since Peter the Great Four Czars Have Been Murdered.

The persevering attempts of Russian conspirators during the last 13 years to assassinate the Emperor—several of which conspiracies have been within an ace of success—vividly show his perilous position. They also bode mischief to the peace of Europe. It is impossible to foretell what would occur if any such catastrophe happened. Would the policy of the future Government be—as now—one of armed peace, or would it imitate the French revolutionists of 1792, and by plunging Russia into foreign war, divert people's attention from home affairs?

Since Peter the Great four Czars have been murdered, but there is no accurate record of baffled conspiracies. It is 13 years since Alexander II. was assassinated, and since then

DOZENS OF PLOTS.

have been unearthed, and the Emperor's life has been repeatedly attempted, but great care has always been taken to prevent the full truth becoming known. The recent discoveries of railways being mined over which the Emperor would have to pass, and of public buildings being also mined which it was known he intended to visit, show the imminence of the danger; and also that the conspirators must be comparatively numerous and possess funds. Danger threatens from different directions: (1) the old Nihilists, who are practically Anarchists. Although these, from their adventurous hardihood, are very dangerous, they are not numerically strong; (2) the old-time type of conspirators, men of the upper and middle classes, who are greatly dissatisfied with the present cast-iron system of rule and standstillism, and who are determined, at any risk, to bring about a change; (3) other so-called conspirators but who outside Russia would not be classed as such; men who abhor assassination, but who seek more or less legally to bring about reforms. In other countries these latter would form legal associations for peacefully effecting reforms, but this cannot be done under that semi-Asiatic despotism. The Russian police often purposely mix them up with the genuine plotters, with whom they have nothing to do.

As showing the extreme peril of the Emperor's position officers of the army and navy and officials of good standing have been discovered among those plotting against his life. The Czar has been so

IMPRESSED WITH HIS DANGER.

that he has created a special Department of state—with its own Minister and police—exempt from all control except his own. Its special object is to safeguard the palace, and also the Emperor during journeys. But unless he can be sure of the fidelity of those about him these extra precautions will be of little use. The assassination of the French President has vastly increased the Czar's danger, for one specialty of the native Russians—to some extent a stumbling block—is that they are an imitative race, more so than any other in Europe. One of two things is reasonably certain to happen within a measurable period: (1) either he will somewhat relax his iron rule of repression and initiate sorely-needed reforms, or (2) he will share the fate of his father. Such a crime will probably start the avalanche over-hanging Europe.

JUSTICE IN RUSSIA.

A Story That Shows That It is Not Extinct.

Gen. Van Wahl, chief constable of the police at St Petersburg, when he was governor at Kief, received a visit one day from a poor woman, the widow of a police agent who had fallen a victim to his duty. For a long time she had solicited the pension which was her due. The head of the police to whom she had addressed her demand sent her always brutally away. What was to become of her and her children? She took the resolution to go and see the governor and told him all her story. "Sit down there and write," replied the General, pointing to a writing-table. The trembling woman took her seat and wrote from the General's dictation a long supplication. "Now address it, and wait for me in the next room."

Two or three minutes afterward the woman was recalled, and the General gave into her hands a sealed letter, saying to her: "Take this letter to the head constable, take care not to open it, and come back to me as soon as you have the reply. A week passed, at the end of which the woman went to the palace again, but this time joyfully; her pension had been granted to her, and she thanked the Governor with joy. "It is useless to thank me; I am nothing in the affair," and he immediately gave the following order: "The head of the police at Kief is dismissed from his post and sent into exile! The reason, because he granted a demand after having received a sum of money for so doing." In the letter which the widow had written to the head of the police, General Wahl had, unknown to her, slipped a bank note for 25 roubles, which accounted for her supplication being granted!

An Awkward Mistake.

Citizen—"If there is anything I hate, it's a little bit of a village where the shopkeepers spend half the time loafing around outside waiting for customers."

Friend—"What's the objection?"

"I took a house for the summer in a place like that, and moved there yesterday. In the afternoon I went out for provisions, and seeing a man standing in the door-way of a small grocery, I told him I would like to see his ham."

"Well?"

"He wasn't the grocer. He was the manager of a traveling minstrel show."

To frighten burglars, Edward Jenkins, of Louisville, kept a savage canine, and displayed this sign: "Look out for the dog." Some thieves poisoned the dog, stole fourteen chickens, and made the sign read: "Look out for the chickens."