

vented the secret they were unanimous in agreeing to conceal from the common property of every one else in the room. But as it was, by one or two people sitting at a small table near the excited speakers paid much attention to them.

The room was filled with people who had come from Dover by boat. Most of them were absorbed in swallowing, in as many minutes as possible, as much food as the voyage had left them appetite for. The two exceptions were a lady and gentleman who had excited much comment on the way, the former by her beauty, the latter by his unmistakable devotion to her, the sea-sickness had damped their ardor. A dozen British tourists had used their prying zeal in finding out the name of the lady who had been so fortunate as to meet their approval, and whether she was the wife or the daughter of the erect gentleman who accompanied her. And discovered with a little peeping and a prying that the lady's name was Madame Lanery, and that M. le General de Lanery, who travelled with her, was her husband. And then they made bets as to whether she was French or English, and I have tried to decide the point by looking round her as she came out of her cabin on arrival at Calais to listen to words she might utter, had not a roughage by that time taken the curl out of amiable vivacity.

Madame de Lanery now sat with her husband at a table near the buffet, looking not unfurled by the sea-journey, which not affected the delicate tints of her complexion, nor disordered the simple arrangement of her dress, which set off to perfection her massive, but still youthful figure. She looked young; men would have said "quite young" and women "still young," but it had been difficult to tell her exact age.

There were tiny little thread-like wrinkles in her fair skin about the mouth and she had the manner of a woman who had been far too long used to excite general attention to notice if it is given or even withheld, while the expression of her face told plainly that she had been long in the world to be heartily tired of it. She was not hungry, and after trying to take sufficient interest in the winged chicken, which her husband had carelessly chosen for her, to eat it, she gave up the attempt; and without noticing that he was eating nothing, she was attracted by the noise, and afterward by the tone of the conversation of the men at the table, until her whole attention was absorbed in trying to catch every word they said.

It was not until they had moved away, and she had a sense of their own indiscretion in the eyes of the unknown lady, that she was fascinated interest upon them, that she discovered, on glancing at her husband, that he was looking very ill. For some minutes she sat with his elbow on the table and her head on his hand, in an attitude of sadness which he had affected in order to conceal from his wife the indisposition she had been too much occupied to notice.

"Did you hear what those men were saying about Gustave?" she asked, with unusual interest in her voice. He raised his head and tried to answer, but not even a spoiled woman could see that he was very ill, and Madame Lanery asked, "What is the matter, Gustave?" with a little natural impatience. "Nothing, Madeline. If you will allow me I will go outside on to the platform and smoke a cigarette before we start; I suppose the passage must have upset me a little."

He pushed back his chair and tried to stand, but he staggered and sat down again, and the room seemed to be spinning round.

Madeline rose to go to her husband's side, but his valet, who had been seated with madame's maid in a smaller room, had opened into the large one, was at his husband's side before her. As curious eyes were being turned from all directions upon her, his wife addressed one of the waiters and had come up to see what was the matter.

"Have you a room to which this gentleman can be taken to? We will have to do the night here."

The general was too ill to protest as he led out of the room and up-stairs to a sparsely decorated apartment overlooking the quay, with two big wooden beds placed back to back against one of the walls. He refused to let her stay with him, saying simply: "My dear child, it is enough to have to put up with an old man; you shall not be troubled with an old man." But when after a little rest he awoke, he sent Joseph to ask if madame kindly came to him.

She came at once; she was very kind, and meant to be very sweet as she led up to the bedside and took his hand, and, looking into the fine face which still handsome in spite of his sixty years, asked him gently if he was better.

"Yes, my dear, I am much better, thank it is very good of you to care so much. How annoying it must be to you to have your journey interrupted in this way, I wanted to suggest that you should go to Rome with your maid and I will follow a few days. You see you will be all when you are once in Rome, since the essence your friend is already there; and I am afraid that if you wait for me you may miss the carnival. For in my impatience to Rome I can see now that I got up too early and I don't think I can continue the journey for several days."

The general had been suffering from an old and rheumatism together, and she felt contrite as she listened.

"It was I who was impatient, not you, my dear, and you came away so soon to me. Why will you spoil me like this? If you were to be a little less indulgent you have no idea what a much better husband you should be. But you still treat me as were in our honeymoon, instead of having been a slave to my caprices for whole years."

She feeling she showed brought a little smile to his face, and he raised her hand to his lips.

"I will take your advice, then, and treat you as hardly as I can. You shall stay with me until I am well enough to regain, and we shall see whether my selfishness really is the best plan, or whether you will be bored to death."

"Oh, no, there is no fear of that," said he quickly. "I am on the track of a most wonderful mystery which would keep me busy for a whole week, I feel sure. When we were sitting at the table down-stairs, the men were talking of a robbery which had occurred near here last week, and I heard

them mention the name of the man they suspected. Just now I asked the chambermaid some questions, and found out that all through the winter most mysterious robberies have been going on about this part of the country; but she said that no one knew who committed them. Then I asked her who M. Victor Fournier was, without telling her that he was the man I had heard was suspected. And she told me he is the handsomest man in Calais, a gentleman only two or three and twenty, the son of a lace manufacturer, who is said to be very rich and very mean. And, of course I am dying to see this supposed Claude Duval, and I am going to call upon the consul and ask him to get me permission to go over M. Fournier's factory on the chance of seeing his son; I shall go as early as possible to-morrow. Isn't it quite an exciting adventure?"

"Yes," said her husband, who felt too jealous of her curiosity to see the "handsomest man in Calais" to share her interest in the story.

They spent the night at the hotel, and on the following afternoon the British Consul himself accompanied Madame de Lanery to M. Fournier's factory at St. Pierre, where, to her great disappointment, old M. Fournier himself showed her over the building, having come there, on receipt of a note from the consul, on purpose to do honor to the beautiful lady.

They passed from room to room, Madame de Lanery scarcely able to conceal that her strong interest in revolving sheets of twisted threads had grown singularly half-hearted and unintelligent, until they came to a corridor, at the end of which a young man was standing. Feeling sure that this must be the hero whom she was so anxious to see, Madame de Lanery looked straight into his face as she passed him. He was neither short nor tall, neither very broad nor very slight, dark-haired and dark-skinned, with a face in which there was nothing to attract particular attention, except the gentle expression of his brown eyes. He glanced shyly at the handsome lady, the expression of whose face suddenly changed from curiosity to horror as she looked at him. Only the young fellow himself noticed the look, which greatly confused and astonished him. Madame de Lanery walked on, and smiled mechanically in answer to some remarks made to her by the two middle-aged gentlemen, but for a few minutes she did not speak. When she had recovered her self-command, she turned to M. Fournier.

"Is that one of your sons, Monsieur?" she asked, glancing back to where the young man stood.

"No, madame; I have only one son, whom I hope to have an opportunity of presenting to you, if you will allow him that honor."

"I shall be delighted, monsieur, to know your son. And that gentleman is—"

"One of my clerks, a young Englishman, introduced to the firm by my English partner, Mr. Beresford."

"I seem to know his face. May I ask you his name?"

"Gerald Staunton."

Out of the mists of the past a face rose before Madeline de Lanery, and a voice called to her. For one instant long-forgotten memories blinded, stunned her; the next she was thanking M. Fournier for his courtesy, and inventing excuses to hurry away from the building.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Building Sites and Choosing Houses.

A writer in a recent number of *Chambers Journal* makes the following good suggestions to persons about to build or purchase a house. In selecting a house, or a site for a new one, remember that where the sun will shine on the house for some hours a day, one element of good is secured, especially if the sunshine enters at the windows of the living rooms or rooms most used during the day time. After the aspect has been found to be suitable, and that a plentiful supply of sun and air is insured, attention should be given to the general position and construction of the house. If the ground is at all porous, a layer of concrete not less than six inches thick, and composed of cement or lime and broken bricks or gravel, should be spread over the whole of the ground covered by the building. This will prevent the passage of ground air up through the floors. Air will travel through the ground for some distance, and, as it invariably becomes contaminated by taking up carbonic acid gas in its passage, is not suitable for inhaling. The house acts as a sucker on the ground, and if, unfortunately, the site is one on "made" ground—that is, composed of all the refuse of a town—the ground air becomes the medium of disease. No houses should be built without a well-ventilated air space between the earth and the ground floor, especially if the layer of concrete on the surface be omitted. The walls should be built of good hard-burnt bricks or non-porous stone set in lime or cement mortar. Common underburnt bricks or porous stones hold moisture, which evaporates with a rise in the temperature, and so chills the air in the house. If the bricks or stones of the walls are suspected of holding moisture, the whole of the external surfaces should be covered with cement, or tiled or slated above. The foundations of the walls should rest on thick beds of concrete bedded in the earth; and to prevent the ground damp rising up the walls, a damp-proof course of slates in cement or a bed of asphalt should be laid in the full thickness or width of the wall just above the ground line. Dryness in this climate is so essential to health that any building which in its floors, walls, or roof sins by admitting moisture should be rejected as a place of residence by those who value their health. In tropical climates buildings are constructed to keep out the heat; but here, we build to retain the heat and keep out the cold.

The Fishing Maiden.

She was full of cunning crinkles, little tricks and wily wrinkles to catch crabs and periwinkles in the waters of the bay. She knew all the leading jobbers in fish tackle, reels and bobbars, and she always caught the robbers that would steal her bait away. She could see without her glasses how to catch her trout and basses, and she gathered in by masses victims of her wily skill. Only one thing was the matter—she could fish but couldn't flatter; and that made the young men scatter—she could never fill the bill.

SCIENTIFIC.

A CHINESE INDUSTRY.—Rev. B. C. Henry states that the fan palm of China grows only in the Sau Ui district, some twenty miles long by ten miles wide. The trees do not yield leaves suitable for fans until six years old. Some trees are said to be over 100 years old, but the tallest measure only about twelve feet. From April to November the leaves are cut monthly, from one to three being taken from each plant. From 10,000 to 20,000 people are employed.

BRAIN GROWTH IN INFANCY.—A striking fact deduced from observations recorded by the late Dr. Parrott is the rapid brain growth in the first half year of life as compared with the increase in height and the growth of other organs. Taking the total growth between birth and six years of age as 100, the weight of the heart increases 11.43 in girls and 11.88 in boys during their first six months of life; the height increases 20.8 in girls and 11.4 in boys; while the weight of brain increases 27.41 in girls and 23.51 in boys.

RAPID COMMUNICATION.—When the first electric telegraph was established, according to the British postmaster-general, the speed of transmission was from four to five words a minute on the five-needle instruments. In 1849 the average rate for a number of newspaper messages was seventeen words a minute. The present pace of the electric telegraph between London and Dublin, where the Wheatstone automatic instrument is employed, reaches 462 words a minute; and thus what was regarded as miraculous sixty years ago has multiplied a hundredfold in one half century.

PREHISTORIC MINES.—An account of some interesting ancient flint mines discovered near Mur-de-Barrez, France, has been given by M. Marcellin Boule. The flints formed a bed underlying some twenty feet of chalk, in which narrow shafts and galleries, still bearing the marks of the rude deer-horn picks, were excavated. The roofs of the galleries were supported by pillars and props as in modern mining, but the results of cave-ins are still to be seen in tools crushed between fallen rocks. Near the shafts are the remains of ancient workshops, where the flint was worked into various articles used in the age of polished stone.

FORMATION OF MOUNTAIN CHAINS.—M. Faye, the well-known French astronomer, has drawn attention at a recent meeting of the French Academy of Sciences to the apparent geological law that the cooling of the terrestrial crust goes on more rapidly under the sea than with a land surface. Hence he argues that the crust must thicken under oceans at a more rapid rate, and so give rise to a swelling up and distortion of the thinner portions of the crust, in other words, to the formation of mountain chains.

DRIVING A SPIKE UNDER WATER.—In mill work, especially when making repairs, it is often necessary to drive large spikes in water to the depth of two, three, and even four feet. The *Manufacturers' Gazette* says one of the neatest and also the best ways of effecting the desired object is to get a piece of steam pipe of sufficient size to permit the spike to drop easily through it. Place one end of this pipe upon the spot where the spike is to be driven, drop the spike into the pipe, point first, and then follow it with an iron rod just large enough to slide easily in the pipe. By using the iron rod as a battering ram, or like a churn drill, the spike can be easily and quickly driven home without splattering the person with mud and water.

Know One Thing Well.

It has been remarked that the farmers who best succeed are those who devote their chief attention to some one product which is favored by their special soil and climate.

By concentrating his attention upon a single product or class of products, and that product favored by nature, the farmer surpasses competitors in other places. There is a world of secrets involved in the raising of a fine field of cabbages. Try one row of fifty plants, and you will wonder that any man ever succeeded in winning the victory over the acute, numerous and unslumbering rivals who dispute with you the possession of every leaf.

The special farmer must of necessity possess all the erudition of his specialty, and he succeeds because he does. A man became rich on the Hudson by raising one variety of apples, the Newton pippin, which brought the best price in Europe and India. There are farmers in Virginia who gain a large revenue by the raising of peanuts.

Is it not precisely the same in all the vocations of mortals? An English lady, who has been struggling for life in New York and Boston for six years as a writer, failed because she did not know how to do any one thing well enough.

She has barely lived, she and her children, while seeing chance after chance glide by which she could not improve because she had not the special skill or special knowledge required.

But she has learned wisdom, which she has utilized in the education of her children. Each of them, "knows one thing well," and both have good prospects of success because of this.

There is one key, only, which will open the door to the bread-winner, and that key is thorough knowledge of and training for the work selected, whether it be making a button-hole or writing a treatise on philosophy. The days of amateur work in any department are over.

How Horses Rest.

"Horses can get some rest standing," said an old trainer, "provided the position be reasonably easy, but no full rest except recumbent. It is known of some horses that they never lie down in the stall, though if kept in pasture they take their rest habitually in a recumbent position. It is well to consider whether the habit has not been forced upon the horse by some circumstance connected with the stall he was made to occupy, in that it had a damp earth floor, or one made of dilapidated plank, uncomfortable to the horse that had been accustomed to select his own bed in the pasture."

"If the horse can have the privilege of selecting his own position for resting on his feet he can sleep standing; but while his muscles may be to a certain degree relaxed, and get rest in that position, what can be said of the bearings at the joints? Without relief through the recumbent position the joint surfaces are forced continuously to bear a weight of from 1,000 to 1,800 pounds. This must act unfavorably, especially upon the complicated structures within the hoofs, which nature intended should have periods of rest each day."