THE MYSTERIOUS CRIME ON THE S.S. NEPTUNE

"Yes, they can't make their faces up properly," observed Foster, putting on his eye-glass; "they're all like very badly painted pictures—but that's a pretty woman over there."

"Yes, by gad, she is," replied Ronald critically; "who is she?"

"The lady we are in search of—Mrs. Taunton—come, and I'll introduce you to her.'"

So Foster, followed by Ronald, pushed his way through the crowd toward Mrs. Taunton, who was standing with her husband, a tall round-shouldered man to whom she was talking in a vivacious manner. A very charming lady she was—small, fair-haired, and wonderfully bright and quick in her conversation and actions. Her face was wreathed with smiles, but during a pause in the conversation it was in repose for a moment, and then Ronald detected a shade of latent melancholy which reminded him somewhat of the sombre expression of his dead friend's face.

"Now do you do, Mrs. Tauntonf" said Foster, when he reached her side; "I have not seen you for at least—let me see—a hundred years!"

"If that is the case," replied the little lady, laughing, "you must have the gift of immortality, for you don't look a day older."

"Nor you a minute," said Foster with a bow. "Permit me to introduce to you my friend, Mr. Monteith; he is come from the wilds of Australia to see if civilization is an improvement on savagery."

"Welcome to London, Mr. Monteith," said Mrs. Taunton, putting out her hand with a sunny smile; "I hope we shall be able to make your stay pleasant."

"I'm sure of that," answered Ronald, heartily, "in such company it would be foolish not to enjoy myself.'"

"What! they know how to make compliments in Australia!"

"When they have a worthy object," with a bow.

"Another! really Mr. Monteith, you are a Sir Charles Grandison."

"I hope not," broke in Foster, who had been talking to Mr. Taunton; "he was a prig—wouldn't be tolerated nowadays; but then," shrugging his shoulders, "how could you expect a linen-draper to conceive a gentleman? It would be easier to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear!"

"Poor Richardson," said the lady, with an amused look, "how severe you are on him. Mr. Monteith, pardon my rudeness; let me introduce to you my husband."

The artist bowed, and shook Ronald by the hand, but said nothing. He was a man of few words, and so left his wife to do most of the talking—a task to which she was fully equal.

"Now, then," said Mrs. Taunton, when the introduction had been effected, "Mr. Foster you can talk art, law, and scandal to my husband, while Mr. Monteith escorts me through the room in order to improve his mind."

Ronald, of course, was delighted, and they strolled off, leaving the lawyer in deep conversation with the artist over a divorce case which was then being published in extenso in the newspapers.

What charming conversationalists some women are! They are as happy in their talk as in their letter-writing; and Mrs. Taunton was a most delightful cicerone; with all Foster's knowledge and wit, but without his cynicism. Cynicism, like garlic, should only be used in moderation, and Ronald found Mrs. Taunton's bright, rapid talk rather a relief after the pessimistic views of his friend, the lawyer. The lady seemed to know everyone—stopped every now and then to talk to people, and, after leaving them, kept up a running fire of conversation about their oddities, which amused the Australian very much.

"How you do seize on people's weak points!" he said, laughing.

"Of course," she replied, "I'm a woman, and have the instinct of the sex."

"Likewise the charms."

"Mr. Monteith, I cannot allow you to pay me any more compliments to-night; but you may call to-morrow at four, if you like, and I shall be prepared for your gallantry."

"I should like it above all things," he said, seriously.

"Why, how grave your face is! I shall have to call you the knight of the rueful countenance. Is anything the matter?"

"I don't know; there might be."

"What an ambiguous reply!" she said, glancing at him curiously. "Are you a spiritualist? Have you had an intimation that all is not right in the other world?"

Her flippancy displeased him, knowing the importance of the matter in question.

"Mrs. Taunton," he said, gravely, looking down at the little figure from his tall height, "I was introduced to you for a purpose, and I am going to take a liberty."

Mrs. Taunton looked a little frightened, and wondered if her good-looking cavalier were mad. He guessed her thoughts,

"Don't be afraid, I am in my senses."

"Then he must be in love with me," thought Mrs. Taunton, in dismay at this eccentric young man; but his next remark caused her to alter her mind.

"You have a brother?" he said, abruptly.

"Yes," she replied, rather puzzled, "I have one brother. I think he is out in Australia. Why," a sudden light breaking in on her, "have you met him?"

"I think so."

"What is he doing?" she asked eagerly.

Ronald parried the question.

"I don't know" he replied; "but I'll tell you all about him to-morrow."

"Is he ill, or in trouble?" she said, quickly. "Please tell me, because I am very—very fond of him."

"Mrs. Taunton," he said, quietly, "I am come here for a purpose."

"Which concerns my brother?"

"Yes. Believe me, I do not ask out of idle curiosity, but will you answer my questions?"

Mrs. Taunton thought a moment.

"It's all so curious," she said, nervously, "but Mr. Foster, who introduced you, is an old friend of mine,"—after a pause, "yes, I will answer your questions."

He led her to a seat and took one beside her, then began to talk.

"Your brother's name is Leopold Verschoyle?"

"Yes."

"He was married in Malta seven years ago?"

"He was."

"And a year afterwards separated from his wife?"

"He did."

"And then?" hesitatingly

"Oh, do not be afraid," she said, coldly; "he fell in love with another woman, and there was a divorce case."

"Verschoyle v. Verschoyle and Macgregor.'"

"You seem to know all about it," replied the lady, a little astonished. "He went to Australia with Miss Macgregor, and since then I have heard nothing about him. What became of them?"

"He married her."

"Oh!" drawing down the corners of her mouth, "then she is his wife now, I presume?"

"No, she is dead!"

"Dead! Then my brother is coming back to England?"

"That I cannot tell you till I call on you, to-morrow."

"What do you want me to do?"

"To show me your brother's portrait—have you one?"

"Yes; only one. Taken just before he left for Malta."

"Good. Then I will call to-morow at four o'clock."

"And then?" rising and taking Monteith's arm.

"I will tell you everything," he replied.

"About what?"

"That depends on—to-morrow."

"You are a most mysterious man," said Mrs. Taunton, in a vexed tone, as he took her back to her husband; "you arouse my curiosity, and then refuse to gratify it—but tell me at least one thing—is my brother well?"

Ronald hesitated. He dare not tell her that her brother—if Ventin indeed were her brother—was dead, so he equivocated.

"I think so," he replied, hurriedly. "Then I will wait for your promised revelation, to-morrow;" and, with a smile, she left him, and went back to her husband, who was still talking to Foster.

"Take me home, George," said Mrs. Taunton, touching her husband's arm; "I am tired."

"Yes, you look pale, my dear," he answered, giving her his arm; "we'd better go at once."

Foster glanced keenly at her and then at Ronald, who, however, shook his head.

"Good-night, Mr. Foster," said Mrs. Taunton, giving him her hand; "you are to call on me to-morrow at four, with Mr. Monteith."

"I will not fail," he replied, with a smile; and taking her husband's arm, she moved away, and was soon lost among the crowd.

When she disappeared, Gerald turned to the Australian, quickly.

"Well?"

"I asked her about her brother," said Monteith, quietly; "and her story corresponds in every particular with that of Ventin."

"Then you think Verschoyle is Ventin?"

"Yes, I think so; but I will be certain to-morrow."

"Oh! in what way?"

"Mrs. Taunton is going to show me her brother's portrait."

"And then?"

"Well," observed Monteith, "if it is Ventin, as I suspect, I think it will be the beginning of the end."

CHAPTER XII.

What queer old places there are in Brocade Street—why, the very name is suggestive of the stately times of the early Georges, and, indeed, Brocade Street was a fashionable locality even earlier, when Queen Anne was ruling, and Marlborough was winning his brilliant victories, and Duchess Sarah was alternately bullying and coaxing her weak-minded mistress. A dark, narrow street with tall houses of red brick on either side, innumerable windows, and heavy-looking doors which had often opened to let out Belinda to her sedan-chair, or Sir Plume on the way to Will's, to have a chat with Sterne and Addison.

Fancy Swift, with his dark, lowering face, walking down this street with his thoughts fixed upon a possible bishopric, or Dick Steele, swaggering along in his rich dress, stopping to take off his hat to Lady Betty Modish, who looked archly at him through the window. And then, at night, when all the streets were in darkness, save for the link boys, poor lost Richard Savage wandering about in company with Samuel Johnson, even at that early age burly and contradictory. Ah, yes; great spirits were abroad in those stirring times, and Brocade Street could tell a few stories of interest, had it a voice; but now the tide of fashion had rolled westward, and the street was left silent and lonely to think over its past glories.

All those famous old houses, with their broad, oak staircases and large, stately apartments, were now used as lodging-houses for decayed gentlefolk; and city clerks found shelter in the rooms which had once re-echoed to the brilliant epigrams of Swift, or the smooth utterances of Joseph Addison.

There were also some artists to be found in the street, for they loved it for its old associations and the dead-world flavor which haunted all the houses—a perfume of past memories of the beaux and belles of Good Queen Anne's gay Court.

Among these was Mr. Taunton, who occupied a tall, gaunt, grim-looking mansion at the upper end, and, though his merry little wife tried hard to persuade him to move to a more civilized locality, he steadily refused to exchange the dead glories of Brocade Street for the fashionable quarters of Kensington. So Mrs. Taunton did the best she could, and beautified the quaint, oak-panelled rooms with rich tapestries, curious old china, and bizarre-looking brasses.

She sat now in her drawing-room waiting for Mr. Monteith and his friend, and wondering what could be the reason of their visit. The soft light of the day, somewhat subdued by the long curtains which draped the windows, stole into the room, and all the picturesque objects were seen in a kind of semi-twilight. Here, a tall column with a bust of a laughing Menade in marble, looking white and still against a background of crimson plush, and there, a landscape picture on an easel with some silken drapery flung carelessly over it. Plenty of easy chairs, spindle-legged tables of Chippendale, cupboards of priceless china, great jars from the Flowery Land which could have hidden the Forty Thieves, and innumerable mirrors all over the walls interspersed with pictures both in oil and water-colors.

Mrs. Taunton herself, in a tea-gown of some soft, clinging material, was flitting about here and there like a restless butterfly—now arranging some flowers with deft hands, and again touching the dainty tea-service of Sevres china which stood at the end of the room.

"I do wish those men would be punctual," said Mrs. Taunton, for the tenth time, as she stood at one of the long windows and looked down the dismal street; "I feel so miserable being alone."

Her husband was up in his studio painting, so she sat down on the window-seat, and leaning her head on her hand began to soliloquize.

"I wonder what that Mr. Monteith wants to tell me," she said to herself; "he must have some news of Leopold; I'm sure I hope so; it is years since I heard from him; and then he left such a lot of things with me; all those jewels which belonged to mother. I hope there's nothing wrong, but I dare say it's all right; Leopold could always look after himself. Ah!" as the rattle of wheels was heard, "there they are," and she left the window quickly, as a hansom drove up to the door.

In a few moments Mr. Monteith and Mr. Foster were announced, and Mrs. Taunton received them with a face wreathed in smiles far different from the melancholy countenance which had gazed out of the window a few moments since. A wonderfully pretty woman she looked in her pale, yellow tea-gown as she advanced to greet the young men with the polished charm of a thorough woman of the world.

"It's rather chilly to-day," observed Monteith, when they were all comfortably seated, and Mrs. Taunton was busy at the tea-table.

"Chilly!" echoed Mrs. Taunton, "Oh! you don't know what cold weather is in London. Wait till you see a fog, a nice, thick, yellow fog, with the sun like a ball of red fire glaring through it, then you'll say its chilly."

"Ugh," said the Australian, with a shudder, "your description is suggestive of the charnel-house."

"Monteith longs for the blue skies of Australia," said Foster, with a laugh, as he received his cup of tea from his hostess.

"So would you," retorted Ronald, "if you had once been there. Life in Australia is like the prairie fever, one is always longing to be back again."

"Perhaps that's the reason my brother stops out there so persistently?" said Mrs. Taunton, leaning back in her chair.

The two gentlemen suddenly became grave, where at the lady sat upagain.

"What do you mean by all this mystery," she asked impetuously; "last night Mr. Monteith roused my curiosity to the highest pitch about my brother, and then refused to gratify it. Is anything wrong? Has Leopold run away with another man's wife, or found a gold mine, or committed a murder, or what?"

She tried to speak lightly, but there was a ring of anxiety in her tones.

"You promised to show me his portrait," said Monteith, suddenly looking up.

Mrs. Taunton arose without a word, and going to a distant table, took up a photograph framed in purple plush, which she placed in Monteith's hands.

"Taken seven years ago," she said.

Monteith looked at the dark, handsome face of the portrait with a vague expression of sadness in his eyes, and handed it to Foster with a sigh:

"It is Lionel Ventin,"

"Ah!" said Foster, with a long breath, as he looked at it, "I thought as much."

"What do you mean by calling my brother Lionel Ventin?" asked Mrs. Taunton quickly, clasping her hands; "that is—that is the name of the man that was—that was—murdered?" The last word come out almost in a shriek as she sprang to her feet.

To be Continued.

Constipated Bowels

Give Rise to Dyspepsia and Other Bodily Derangements—Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are Unique as the Only Treatment Which Permanently Cures Constipation.

Constipation, or inactivity of the bowels, is probably the cause of more distress and suffering than any other organic derangement. Once the bowels are constipated the kidneys become clogged, the liver torpid and the stomach and whole digestive system completely interfered with.

The head aches, there is dizziness, weakness and dimness of vision, pains in the back, sides and limbs, the accumulation of wind and gas on the stomach, pains and fulness in the region of the stomach and depression and despondency of spirits.

Constipation can not be cured by the use of salts and similar weakening and debilitating purgatives. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills not only cause the natural action of the bowels but so strengthen and invigorate them as to enable them to regularly perform their functions without the aid of medicines. They also act on the liver and kidneys, and so revitalize the whole excretory system and permanently cure the most serious cases of constipation, biliousness and dyspepsia.

Mr. Henry Moore, Pickering, Ont., states: "In the fall of 1895 I used three or four boxes of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills for Constipation and Stomach Troubles and never found anything to compare with them. I had suffered from these complaints for many years and taken many kinds of medicine, but it remained for Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills to cure me. am now well and strong, but continue to take one or two pills a week to counteract the uric acid condition in the blood and to keep the bowels perfectly regular."

Mr. James Gardiner, Bath, Ont., says:—"I was a sufferer for forty years from indigestion and constipation. At times I would go two weeks without a motion in my bowels, suffered violently from headaches. I spent a small fortune in remedies, but the only remedy that gave me relief was Dr. Chase's Kidney Liver Pills. I would not be without them for anything."

Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, One pill a dose, 25 cents a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

SLOW STARVATION.

THE CONDITION OF THOSE AFFLICTED WITH INDIGESTION.

Flatulency, Sick Headache, Offensive Breath and Eructations, Irritability, and a Feeling of Weight on the Stomach are Among the Symptoms.

Dyspepsia, or indigestion, as it is also frequently called, is one of the most serious ailments that afflicts mankind. When the stomach loses its craving for food, and the power to digest it, the person so afflicted is both mentally and physically in a condition of wretchedness. The symptoms of the disorder are manifold, and among them may be noted, a feeling of weight in the region of the stomach, sick headache, offensive breath, heartburn, a disagreeable taste in the mouth, irritability of temper, disturbed sleep, etc. The condition is in fact one of slow starvation of the blood, nerves and body; and on the first symptoms treatment through the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills should be sought. Mr. William Birt, a well known blacksmith at Pisquid, P. E. I., is one who suffered for years, and relates his experience for the benefit of similar sufferers. Mr. Birt says:—"For many years I was a victim of indigestion, accompanied by nervousness, palpitation of the heart and other distressing symptoms. My appetite was irregular, and what I ate felt like a weight in my stomach; this was accompanied by a feeling of stupor or sleepiness, and yet I rarely enjoyed a night's sound sleep. When I would retire a creeping sensation would come over me, with pains and fluttering around the heart, and then when I arose in the morning, I would feel as tired and fatigued as I did before I went to bed. It is needless to say that I was continually taking medicine, and tried, I think, almost everything recommended as a cure for the trouble. Occasionally I got temporary relief, but the trouble always came back, usually in a still more aggravated form. All this, of course, cost a great deal of money, and as the expenditure seemed useless I was very much discouraged. One day one of my neighbors, who had used Dr. Williams' Pink Pills with much benefit, advised me to try them, and I decided to do so, thinking nevertheless, that it would be but another hopeless experiment. To my great gratification, however, I had only been using the pills a few weeks when I felt decidedly better, and things began to look brighter. I continued taking the pills for several months, with the result that my health was as good and my digestion better than it had ever been. One of the most flattering results of the treatment was my increase in weight from 125 pounds to 155 pounds. It is more than a year now since I discontinued the use of the pills and in that time I have not had the slightest return of the trouble. We always keep the pills in the house now, and my family have used them for other ailments with the same gratifying results."

These pills may be had from any dealer in medicine, or will be sent post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for $2,50, by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

USED TO IT.

Her Mother—You will assume a grave responsibility when you marry my daughter. Remember she was brought up in the lap of luxury.

Her Adorer—Oh, she's pretty well used to my lap now.

How He Become Best Man.

There is an old German retrain that runs somewhat as follows:

"The paradise of earth
Is found on horseback."

That morning it returned to me, why I know not, for I had heard no German for years. Anyway, as I say, it recurred to me as I walked along in the spring sunshine, clad in faultless riding attire, toward a well-known riding stable, where I intended to procure a mount for a long ride.

It was still quite early and I found the groom lazily pillowed against the stable door whistling softly to himself. He glanced at my high boots, which reflected the morning sun, and smiled, while I explained my intention. I chose a beautiful roan called Darling. "A horse that was as gentle as a lamb," pertinently added the groom.

I had intended to ride along the drives, where the shade was thick and the young ladies wandered up and down during the morning hours, but Darling held other views, and carried the day with gentle persistence. What could I do with the beast? And, after all, what difference does it make where one rides so long as one does ride? So we hastened to the outskirts of the town where the sun was hottest. That was Darling's choice. Darling paused before the first inn and absolutely refused to budge, so to give myself a countenance, I ordered a glass of ale from the waiter who hurried out and found it as poor as I had expected.

"Wonderful what them beasts do know sir," he commented patting Darling's glossy neck. "Now, this one allus gets sugar here, and he knows it sir, he do."

So Darling munched his lump of sugar and then consented to trot along. This earthly paradise presented many pitfalls for me. At first Darling skirted a never-ending wall so closely that the polish vanished from my left boot and my leg felt as if it had been plunged in an electric bath. Then he carried me under a row of low-spreading apple trees that coquetted with my hat, which I saved only at the risk of my life and limb, and rumpled my well-brushed hair. I breathed with relief as we entered into a grove where the trees arched high above me, and walls were a thing unknown. But alas! there was a pond, and Darling paused dreamily beside its ready, swampy shores. I was terrified. Suppose the horse should suddenly decide to take a bath; I patted, coaxed, twitched at the bridle, all in vain. Darling refused to advance. At last my patience giving out, I plunged my rowels into him, setting the springs of his rear legs in violent disorder. The turf flew around my ears, but always in the same spot. Fortunately I had thoughtfully provided myself with sugar at the inn, and with its aid succeeded in calming Darling so far that he consented to stand still.

I soon discovered a slender figure in the distance, approaching at a swift gallop. I tugged at the reins—unavailingly, of course; then, to make the best of my sorry lot and lend some shadow of reality to the ridiculous figure I must cut stationed before the swamp pond, I fastened my eyes upon the swaying branches, apparently lost in meditation.

Trot, trot, echoed behind me; the lady was close at hand; in an instant she would have passed me. But Darling whirled suddenly almost flinging me over his head into the water, and flew along after the other horse. I consoled myself that at this pace we should soon outdistance her, but as we came neck to neck, my mount slowed up, and trotted along, contentedly suiting himself to the other's pace.

I knew the young lady by sight, and felt forced to bow. She nodded stiffly, and urged her horse on, while I endeavored to check Darling. As well try to curb the thunderbolts. I was powerless. She dashed on, I following always, at infinite peril of my life and limb, for I was not accustomed to this rapid pace. Besides, I am a man who dislikes to appear forward. I was mortally ashamed of myself, but no power on earth could check the beast I was riding. Darling neighed scornfully as I tugged at the bit, and kept on in his mad career.

Miss Van Deemen glanced contemptuously at me and turned down a side-path. Darling clung to her skirts with deplorable fidelity. And I had noticed a placard warning all trespassers off under penalty of the law! The law was, then, to be added to my other miseries; but I consoled myself with the thought that its representatives could scarcely control my horse, since I myself had failed in the attempt.

But Miss Van Deemen had reached the limit; she reined in her horse, and Darling stood immovable! "Sir," she said, anger and fear in every line of her pretty face, "I must ask you to leave me at once."

Heavens, if I only could! I would even have climbed a tree, but Darling was not to be persuaded.

"'Sir—"

"Pardon me; it really is not my fault; it is purely accidental that our paths lie in the same direction," I replied, hypocritically.

"Then I will return," said she, glancing at the placard in silent comment upon my excuse. But Darling whirled, too, knocking me heedlessly against the nearest tree, thereby barking my knee in painful fashion; then trotted determinedly on by the lady's side out on to the broad highway that was equally forbidden to me at that instant.

Miss Van Deemen bit her lips in silence growing alternately white and red and I kept on in overpowering shame, but helpless as the infant in its cradle. At last she turned to me with tears in her eyes.

"I beg you, sir, to leave me. You cannot imagine how dreadfully you will embarrass me if you persist in this unwarranted pursuit. I appeal to your chivalry for I—I expect my fiance here with whom I am secretly engaged. He is dreadfully jealous, so I beg of you to leave me!"

She almost sobbed as she spoke, and in the distance I could hear echoing hoofbeats, which she, too, must have distinguished. I knew the gentleman to whom she referred, at least by sight; and I confess I had no desire for closer acquaintance under such circumstances.

I used my whip unsparingly, but to no purpose. Darling would not budge. In the meantime the rider appeared at the turning and greeted the young lady pleasantly enough, though he glanced at me disapprovingly.

"Pray introduce your companion," he said sharply. Miss Van Deemen turned purple and looked reproachfully at me.

"I don't know the gentleman," she stammered. He happened to be riding in the same direction as I."

"Purely accidental," I repeated, bowing, inwardly praying that the earth would open and swallow me up.

"Indeed!" said the gentleman, and turned his back deliberately on me.

"Permit me to accompany you, Miss Van Deemen," I heard as I bent low over Darling's neck, apparently absorbed in a saddle buckle, I heard them trot off, and then felt myself carried along at a furious pace, and an instant later I landed beside Miss Van Deemen, breathless, but still in my saddle. Mr. Courtney—so she had styled her escort,—glared at me, muttering something between his teeth.

"Sir," I ventured, overcoming my embarrassment.

"'Will you have the goodness to leave us?' he shrieked.

"The road is free to all," I replied, annoyed by his manner, for I had started upon an explanation.

"'But yours is not beside this lady, whom you are insulting," he raged.

"I regret it exceedingly, but—"

"I forbid you to ride beside her" he snapped, angrily.

"You can forbid me nothing. I am not your servant."

"Sir," he shrieked, "you are an insolent puppy, and I must insist upon an explanation for your——" Here Miss Van Deemen interfered.

"'For mercy's sake, no violence! There must be a mistake somewhere, but I am sure it is not intentional."

"Nothing could be farther from my thoughts," I assured her truthfully, "Then prove it by leaving us," she implored.

I bowed. Then overcome with rage at the brute that had led me into this pitfall, I lashed Darling unmercifully. But Darling merely whirled around in a bewildering tarentella until I could scarcely see or hear, then finally flew across country in a wild gallop. And behind me came a steady trample, trample. Was Mr. Courtney determined to punish what he called my insolence, or—

Darling stopped as suddenly as he had started, and a tear-stained face appeared at my elbow, and behind her, like an avenging angel, stormed her furious admirer, and then we three halted once more.

"So this was prearranged," he snapped. "I thought so. You have simply been leading me on, to make a fool of me at last, forgetful of every womanly——'"

"Jack, Jackm" cried Miss Van Deemen, imploringly.

"Confess it," he shouted furiously.

"But I don't even know him," she sobbed.

"Then, sir," answer like a man!" he said, turning to me. "Confess that you know this lady."

A silvery laugh startled us both at this juncture.

"We don't know each other," cried Miss Van Deemen, but out horses apparently do."

And, indeed, in the midst of this anger and strife our two horses presented an idyllic picture as they stood gently rubbing noses.

"Yes, so it seems, But how could it happen?, Isn't that your own?" asked Mr. Courtney.

"Why, Jack, how could I ever have gotten away? Of course, I had to hire a horse. You know papa never lets me ride without the groom. I got this one at Tattersall's."

"So did I," I exclaimed; "that's why the brutes stick so close."

And then we all laughed together. After which, as we couldn't separate we continued our ride together, and at the close had cemented a friendship so firm that when Miss Van Deemen finally married Jack Courtney I was asked to officiate as best man.

But in spite of this happy conclusion, I determined to take no more morning rides until I knew a little more about the art. It doesn't do to tempt fate too often.

ENGLAND'S NEW SUBMARINE BOAT.

The latest stories of a submarine boat, which is to blow opposing battle-ships out of the water and revolutionize naval warfare, come from England, where the authorities hitherto have exhibited much indifference on the subject. It is said the machine dives with facility, travels well under water, and is perfectly capable of attaching a mine of 500 pounds of gun-cotton to the bottom of the largest iron-clad and getting out of danger before the explosion which is to dissipate her enemy in unappreciable particles. The boat further is able to discharge torpedoes above and below water, and is armed with quick-firing and machine guns, with which she can give a good account of herself upon the surface. It is noteworthy that nothing is said about either of the two vital qualifications, equilibrium and vision; and, also that the vessel has not yet been accepted or tested by the Admiralty. Her true value, therefore, is still problematical. Meanwhile the French profess to be satisfied completely with the behavior of the Gustave Zede, the Narval and the Gymnote, and are preparing to construct a flotilla of forty of these travelling submarine torpedoes. It does not appear that they are to be equipped for fighting above water as well as below it.

ROYAL ALTRUISM.

Here is a little anecdote regarding the bereaved Queen Marguerite of Italy. Her Majesty, whose kindly thoughtfulness is porverbial, became interested in the condition of a poor girl who had, in simple kindness, knitted a pair of stockings, and sent them to her on her birthday. Her Majesty often resorts to ingenious ways of showing her generosity, and on this occasion she sent the little girl a pair of stockings in return for those she had received. One of these stockings was filled with coin and the other with candies. With the gift the kindly Queen sent a letter, written with her own hand, which contained the following words:

"Write and tell me, my child, which you like the better of these two stockings—which one gives you the more pleasure?"

Next day Queen Marguerite received this disappointing reply:

"Dear Madame Queen—About the stockings I have had just sorrow, and nothing more, for my father took the one with the money, and my brother the one with the bon-bons."

MUSHROOM CROP.

The annual crop of mushrooms in France is valued at $2,000,000, and there are 60 wholesale firms in Paris dealing exclusively in them. In the Department, of the Seine, it appears, there are some 3,000 caves in which mushrooms are grown, and about 300 persons are employed in their culture.

THE FIVE TOES.

This little cow eats grass,
This little cow eats hay,
This cow drinks water,
This little cow runs away.
This little cow does nothing
But just lie down all day—
We'll whip her.

PERSONAL

Interesting Items Concerning Nobles and Their Estates.

On September 13th, Lord Pauncefote, the English Ambassador at Washington, celebrated his seventy-second birthday. His lordship stands six feet two in height, has a massive bald head, heavy black eyebrows, and strongly marked features. The Pauncefotes are supposed to date back some 800 years, they being possessed of lands in the time of William the Conqueror. The name was originally Pauncefort, derived from the French "Pensesfort.' Lord Pauncefote, in spite of his age, is a vigorous and enthusiastic cyclist.

The Marquess of Bute, whose fifty-third birthday occurred a few days ago, has held his title since he was six months old. Nearly all Cardiff belongs to him, and the additional immense income derived from coal mines makes the Marquess a millionaire several times over. He owns six mansions, the finest of which is Mountstuart, Rothesay. Indeed, this place is said to be the costliest private residence in the world. It contains 150 rooms, and the noble owner has spent over one million pounds sterling on it.

A romance of the peerage is recalled by the recent birthday of the younger Earl Poulett. He is the only son of the late Earl by his third wife. The elder Earl Poulett, the claimant, is also a son of the earl by his first wife, and the story of his career as Viscount Hinton, the organ-grinder, is well known. The Poulett peerage, pronounced Paulett, dates from 1627, and the estate of 11,000 acres is said to bring in an income of £20,000 a year. Notwithstanding this, however, the late peer went through the Bankruptcy Court.

The Duke of Buccleuch, owns nearly 500,000 acres of land and seven palatial mansions, while his revenue amounts to nearly £300,000 a year. In 1455 one of the Duke's ancestors, Sir Walter Scott, not the novelist, of course, fought for King James II. against the Douglases, and as a reward received a very large share of the forfeited Douglas estates. This was the beginning of the Buccleuch luck. In the way of titles, the family possesses twelve, viz., two dukedoms, one marquisate, four earldoms, one viscounty, and four baronies.

It is not generally known that the United States possesses a real live peer—all its very own! Lord Fairfax, however, is practically an American citizen. The sixth baron went across the Atlantic in the time of George Washington, whose friend he was, and all his descendants have lived and married in the Republic. The present Lord Fairfax is a properly qualified medical man in Maryland, where he is simply known as "Mr. John Contee Fairfax." The Fairfax family lost all their Yorkshire estate in the Civil War of 1642.

NOISELESS POWDER.

The Invention of a German Who Experimented in America.

The success of smokeless powder in modern warfare has been such as to prompt a man of an inventive turn of mind to manufacture a powder which is said to be also noiseless. It is the invention of a German workman who studied the chemistry of explosives in this country. He has already given a private exhibition of the practicability of his discovery with considerable success. A shell loaded with his powder was fired at a target 50 yards away and the only sound indicating the explosion was the falling of the plunger of the shell, Bohnengal, which is the name of the inventor, has not, it is said, yet sold the secret of the process, but is still in treaty with different Governments for its purchase.

HALLOWEEN LOVE TESTS.

The most common and most peculiar ways of making matrimonial forecast is by means of roasting nuts. Two nuts are placed side by side, and named for the person trying and the preferred lover or "loveress." If they burn quickly and brightly it means sincerity and affection; cracking and jumping away means inconstancy; if they burn together a happy marriage is indicated. Another trial is to name two nuts and then throw them into the fire; if one of the nuts should burst the person for whom it is named is not sincerely affectionate; but if it is reduced to ashes a warm feeling is betokened, says the Home Companion. Perplexity comes to the poor maiden whose two nuts both burn to ashes, unless her feelings help her to give the preference.

Legend of the Arbutus.

Many moons ago there lived an old man alone in his lodge beside a frozen stream in the forest. His locks and beard were long and white with age. He was heavily clad in furs, for snow and ice were everywhere. The winds blew wildly through the forest, and the old man went about searching in the deep snow for pieces of wood to keep up the fire in his lodge. In despair he returned to the lodge, and, sitting down by the last few dying coals, he cried to Mannahoosho that he might not perish. And the wind blew aside the door and there came in a beautiful maiden. Her cheeks were red and made of wild roses; her eyes were large, and her hair touched the ground as she walked. Her hands were covered with willow buds, and her clothing was of sweet grasses and ferns. Her moccasins were of white lilies, and when she breathed the air of the lodge became warm. The old man said; "My daughter, I am glad to see you. My lodge is cold and cheerless, but it will shield you from the tempests. Tell me who you are. I am Manito. I blow my breath and the waters of the rivers stand still." The maiden said: "I breathe and the flowers spring up in all the plains." The old man said: "When I walk about the leaves fall from the trees at my command, the animals hide in their holes in the ground and the birds fly away." The maiden said: "When I walk about the plants lift up their heads, the trees cover their nakedness with leaves, the birds come back and all who see me sing." Thus they talked and the air became warm in the lodge. The old man's head dropped upon his breast and he slept. Then the sun came out, and a bluebird came to the top of the lodge and called, "Say-ee, say-ee! I am thirsty!" And the river called back, "I am free, come and drink." And as the old man slept the maiden passed her hands above his head and he began to grow small. Streams of water ran out of his mouth, and soon he was a small mass upon the ground. His clothes turned to green leaves, and the maiden, leaning upon the ground, took from her bosom the most precious flowers and hid them all about under the leaves. Then she breathed upon them and said, "I give all my virtues and my sweetest breath, and all who would pick thee must do so on bended knee." Then the maiden moved away through the woods and over the plains. All the birds sang to her, and wherever she stepped, and nowhere else, grows the arbutus.

PREHISTORIC RUINS IN MEXICO.

Aztecs Counted Their Population By Millions.

Prehistoric ruins were found on all the ridges of Guerrero and at a point called Cacahuatla two columns of trachyte, 4 1-2 feet long by 18 inches in diameter, lay side by side. They were completely covered with hieroglyphics, with a five-pointed star on one end. Each of them must weigh between 400 and 500 pounds. About three hundred metres up the hill were ruins of a building over a hundred feet long. It is difficult to imagine what these columns have been used for, unless as altars of a temple. Several blocks of diorite, fourteen inches square, were scattered about, so it is evident that the edifice was of more than ordinary importance. The ground for hundreds of yards was completely strewn with fragments of broken pottery, but the brush and undergrowth was so dense that only a small part of the locality was explored.

Regarding these Guerrero ruins there is sufficient evidence, to prove that the country has been inhabited by some millions of people. What such a vast population could have subsisted on in this wild, broken up country on the hill summits and sides of deep barrancas, is impossible to conceive, unless a great seismic disturbance has changed the topography of the land. That corn was one of their chief articles of food is proven by the mortars and pestles which are found in nearly every ruin, but where this cereal was grown is a mystery as there does not appear to be more than sufficient soil to raise corn for the present Indian inhabitants. Then there is the question of water. Although Guerrero is a very well watered State, it is often miles from these prehistoric dwellings and in almost inaccessible canons.

EVIDENCE AGAINST HIM.

Shrewd Deacon—Go ahead, I guess you'll not catch me napping.

Trader—I don't know about that, if I'm to judge of what I saw in church last Sunday.

EXPOSED FOR DARK AREAS